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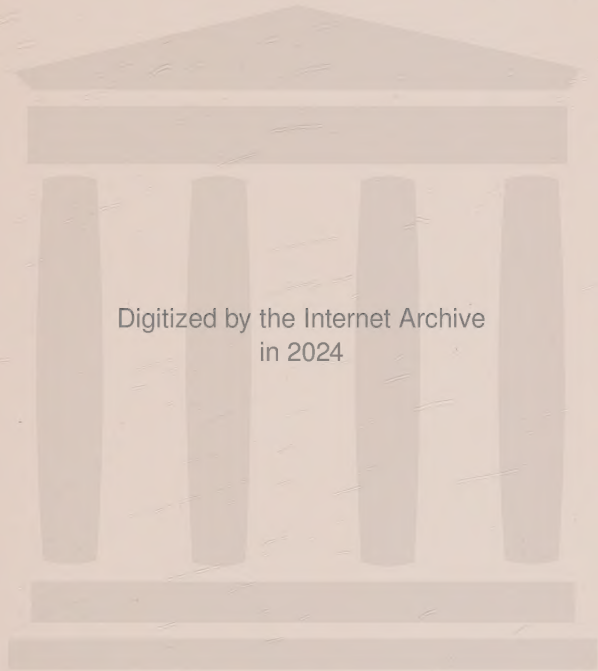
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THE GOOD SHEPHERD.
John 10: 14.

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A CHILD'S LIFE OF CHRIST

NATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA

232.9

CURRICULUM LAB
THEOLOGY LIBRARY
CLAREMONT, CA 91711

PRINTED IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREFACE

IT is delightful to witness the deep interest which children take in the History of their Saviour; they are early attracted and sweetly riveted by the wonderful Story of the Master from the Manger to the Throne.

If God has implanted in the infant heart a desire to hear of Jesus, surely it behooves the friends of little children (whom Jesus delighted so to gather around Him) to bring together from Scripture every incident, expression and description, within the verge of their comprehension, and to weave them into a memorial garland of their Saviour.

Children will gaze with admiring love upon each wondrous act and word—from the pure snowdrop of innocence in the manger to the passion-flower of

agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, and thence to the glorious Ascension of our Divine Saviour into Heaven.

The command given by our Lord to those He sent forth was to "Preach and Teach." We, in this little book, humbly try to follow in their steps. We have introduced a profusion of illustrations, regarding them as being very important in a narrative of occurrences so distant from this modern life of ours, both in time and place.

A Child's Life of Christ

CHAPTER I

PALESTINE AT THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD—THE ANNUNCIATION TO MARY—THE SAVIOUR BORN IN BETHLEHEM—THE WISE MEN AND THE STAR.

VERY far away from our own country lies the land where Jesus Christ was born. More than five thousand miles stretch between us and it. It rests in the very heart and center of the Old World, encircled by Asia, Europe, and Africa. A little land, it is only about two hundred miles in length and but fifty miles broad; but its hills and valleys, its dusty roads and green pastures, its vineyards and olive yards, and its village streets have been trodden by the feet of our Lord; and for us, as well as for the Jews, to whom God gave it, it is the Holy Land.

More than nineteen hundred years ago there lived in the quiet town of Nazareth a pious Jewish maiden: her name was Mary. She was going to be married to a poor man named Joseph, who was a carpenter by trade. Though living thus in humble life, they were of the royal family of Judah, and were the descendants of King David.

The Jews were very particular to keep exact lists of the names of their families—genealogies, they called them—and these lists went back for many hundred years.

Though Joseph and Mary belonged to the royal family of David, yet they lived in Nazareth of Galilee, far away from King David's city, Bethlehem.

The Roman Emperor Augustus had conquered Palestine and put a king of his own choosing on the throne of Judah. His name was Herod the Great—great indeed in nothing good—great only in wickedness. This Herod was king, under Augustus, and he was obliged to rule as the Emperor ordered.

We now go back to Nazareth, and see Mary, who is sitting alone in her own house. A glorious visitor stands before her, and says, Peace be with you, Mary. Be glad, for the Lord is with you, and has blessed you more than any other woman. Mary saw that her bright visitor was an angel of God, and she felt troubled at his saying. What did it mean, why was he sent to her? she asked herself.

Then the angel told her, not to fear; for he came to tell her that God would send her a baby—a wonderful baby. It would be no other than *Jesus,* the long-promised Saviour of the world.

Oh, how long the world had waited for this Son of the woman, which was to undo the mischief caused by Satan, according to the promise made thousands of years ago to Adam and Eve. And how often from that time had the prophets foretold his coming, how a virgin should have a son, who would be Christ the Lord!

THE INFANT JESUS

Mary had heard all these wonderful and true sayings of God, and she was glad to find that, of all the women of Israel, she was the one chosen to be the mother of this child.

But the old prophets said that this child was to be born at Bethlehem, whereas Mary lived at Nazareth. This old saying, however, came exactly true in a strange way.

The Emperor Augustus, who was the master of the land of Palestine, said that he wanted a list of the names of every man and woman, their ages, their rank, and their trades, throughout the land. This list was called a census and was taken every ten years.

Herod was to make out the list; and he said, to prevent mistakes, he must take the people according to the tribe to which they belonged. Every one was, therefore, obliged to go to the city to which his tribe or family belonged, however troublesome or however far it might be for some of them. They could not help it—the will of Augustus was law and had to be obeyed.

Yes, into every city, into every town, into every village, there came a messenger to say, Every one must go to his right place, to have his name put down in the list for the Emperor.

Now Joseph and Mary belonged to the family of David, of the tribe of Judah; so they had to go to Bethlehem, for that was David's city, to have their names written down.

It was about sixty miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, a very long journey in those days.

How tired they are, and how glad to see the white

walls of the little city through the olive trees and vines which grew around it!

It is evening, and the city is full, for others, like them, have come from a distance to be registered. They go to the inn, but there is no place for them— where shall they sleep for the night?

The master of the inn pities them, for Mary looks so tired, and he says, They may rest in the stable for the night. How glad Joseph and Mary are even of that lowly place! There is straw for them to lie upon, and a roof over their heads; but that is all. The oxen and asses are around them, and many are going and coming; but they are thankful, after their long and weary journey, to find any shelter in Bethlehem.

That night the old saying of Micah (v. 2) the prophet came true; for there, at Bethlehem, did God send to Mary the promised baby. Yes, that night was the most wonderful and most joyous in the world's history; for then was born the Son of God.

Mary took her baby, and dressed him in some long clothes, called swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. She had no soft cradle near; she dared not lay him on the ground, lest the beasts should tread on him, so she put him into one of the troughs from which the cattle ate their food.

On the night that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, some shepherds were watching their flocks in the fields around the city.

More than a thousand years before had David, when a lad, kept his father's sheep in the very same place. Now, these shepherds were guarding their

flocks from the wolves and foxes, which still lived in the hills and woods of Palestine.

Most likely these shepherds were good men, who were waiting for the coming of the Saviour, like many other pious men of Israel. According to the writings of their prophets, they knew that the time of his birth must be near at hand. But now the time *has* come, only as yet they knew it not.

All at once, they see a strange bright light. It is night, so it is not the sun; nor is it the moon—nor the stars. Brighter than the brightest day is this light from Heaven.

The glory of the Lord shines round about them. No wonder they are afraid.

Then an angel spoke to them, and said in kindest tones, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. He is a new-born baby, lying in a manger at the inn of Bethlehem. Go, and you will find him.

Now they saw in the sky a great number of angels, who filled the air with their praises; and the shepherds heard the words of the angels' cradle-song. It was this:

> Glory be to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace, good-will toward men.

Having sung this song, the angels went back to Heaven: the light faded away, and all was dark as before.

The shepherds now began talking together about these strange sights and sounds. And they said,

THE ANGEL SPOKE TO THEM

Let us go the nearest way to Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass.

They did not say, Let us wait till morning, because of our flocks; no, the event was so great they could not wait till then to see its truth.

At once, with haste, they went to the inn of Bethlehem, into the court-yard, around which were the stables. There, even as the angels had said, and as they expected to find, was the babe lying in a manger, with Mary and Joseph by his side.

Said they to Mary, This baby is the Saviour of the world, the long-promised Messiah; we knew we should find him here, for God has sent his angels to-night to tell us of his birth. The whole air was filled with music from Heaven, and we heard the angels sing,

> Glory be to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace, good-will toward men.

Mary, like all other mothers, kept these sayings about her baby like treasures in her heart. Often and often, in after years, did she think over all the strange things that had happened at the birth of this child.

The shepherds could not stay any longer in Bethlehem, for their flocks were alone; but they told many in the city what they had heard and seen. Every one that heard the good news wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. Many heard; but all did not believe. As it was then, so it is now.

To *you* is the Saviour sent; do you know it—and do you love him?

Many pious men in Israel were at this time looking for the birth of a great Prince, and this expectation was shared in by many people in other parts of the world.

In one of the countries east of Palestine, probably Arabia, there lived some Wise Men—magi, sages, or, perhaps, priests. As they lived near the borders of the old kingdom of Chaldea, no doubt they had heard of the prophecy of Daniel (vii. 14) in which he spoke of the coming, about this time, of Messiah the Prince, to whom should be given glory and a kingdom.

Or they had most likely heard from the children of Moab, whose country was also near theirs, of the saying of Balaam (Numb. xxiv. 17, 19), "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. Out of Jacob shall come he that hath dominion."

It was more than fourteen hundred years before that these words were spoken, and now that "Star" has arisen.

These Eastern sages were one night looking at the sky, studying, as was their way, the movements of the stars.

As they gazed into the quiet depths of the midnight sky, they saw a new bright star.

Is this the star of Jacob's Ruler? said they; surely it is the sign of that Great King's coming! With feelings of awe and wonder they continued to gaze on. At last they said, We will go to Jerusalem, where the God of Israel has his temple; and perhaps there we shall hear that he has come. We will go and worship him, and will take some gifts for his

acceptance; for no one in the East ever thinks of going to see a great person without taking a present with him.

When they reached Jerusalem, they earnestly asked the people whom they met, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him!

King Herod and the people of Jerusalem had not yet heard of his birth, and these inquiries of the Wise Men troubled them.

Herod was afraid. The King of the Jews, did the Wise Men say? Perhaps he will one day take away my crown, and himself sit upon the ancient throne of David. Thus thought this wicked king.

Herod became more and more frightened, for he must have heard something of the old prophecies, which people were expecting to be fulfilled. His own conscience must have troubled him, too, as the thought of many of his crimes arose in his mind. But he need not have feared this King of the Jews, for his kingdom was to be one over the hearts of men: it was "not of this world."

Then Herod said, Call all the men together who are wise in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Then the chief priests, and the scribes, who were the writers of the law, met together at Herod's command.

Tell me where your writings say that Christ should be born, demanded he.

They quickly answered, In Bethlehem of Judæa, as they unrolled the parchment on which Micah's ancient prophecy was written.

They showed him the words most plainly written,

THE WISE MEN PRESENTED GIFTS

"But thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel."

It is enough! said Herod; and he sent for the Wise Men.

He asked them when they had first seen the star, for he felt sure that it was the star of the King of Israel. Go, said he, to Bethlehem, for it is there, and not at Jerusalem, that the prophets say this child is to be born. When you have found him, as I feel sure you will, come back and tell me, that I also may go and worship him.

Dark, wicked, cruel thoughts were even now coming into Hero's mind; he never meant to go to worship this infant King.

These Eastern sages now turned from Jerusalem to go to Bethlehem, which was a few miles off. They felt quite sure now that they were walking in the right road, for lo! they saw again the beautiful star that they had seen in their own land. Exceeding great was their joy; and the star never left them again till they came to the place where the young child was.

They went to the house in which Joseph and Mary now lived, and there they saw the baby in the arms of his mother.

Did they turn away and say, This poor infant cannot be a King; if he were, he would have come to a kingly dwelling, in the midst of the well-born and the noble?

No: had not *the star* guided them? With faith and reverence these Wise Men at once fell down and

worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

That night God told them in a dream not to return to Jerusalem to tell Herod what they had seen, but to go straight home some other way.

Bring thou thy gifts to Jesus Christ,
Not gold nor incense sweet;
But golden love and precious faith,
As offerings most meet.

CHAPTER II

HEROD SLAYS THE YOUNG CHILDREN—THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT—THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

HEROD was waiting with great impatience for the return of the Wise Men to Jerusalem. He was continually asking his servants if they had heard or seen anything of them. At last, after waiting some time, he said, They must have gone home again by now; they have found the infant King, and they would not come to tell me about him. But I will have my revenge. In great anger he sent for some Roman soldiers, and said, Make haste, and go to Bethlehem. A young King has lately been born there, and I will have him killed at once. I do not know in which house this baby is; but to make sure of his death, you shall go into every house in the place, and kill every child under two years old.

Do you think that these soldiers said, Surely the King Herod will alter his mind when his passion is gone? No; they knew too well that he was old in cruelty, and that it was of no use for them to refuse to obey his orders.

I will tell you one thing that Herod did, to show you how very merciless he was. He knew that he had been so cruel to the Jews, that they would rejoice to hear of his death. He said he would make them sorry when he died. So he gave a secret order that the best people of the Jewish nation should be put to death as soon as he was dead himself. Then, he said, all the Jewish nation will be weeping. I am glad to say, though, that the people whom he told to do this dreadful deed did not obey him after he was dead.

Of course, if he had so hard a heart he would not care about killing a few babies to please his wicked passion.

His soldiers enter Bethlehem. Why are these men come here? the people ask.

They had not long to wait for an answer. The soldiers went into one house after another, and snatched every baby from its mother's breast, and threw it down again a lifeless corpse. Every little child that was just able to walk about they caught up in their arms, and pierced it with their swords. In vain the mothers ran with their babies to the tops of their houses; in vain the fathers carried their little ones to the vineyards round; every garden was searched, every door was opened, and every child under two years old was killed. And from the city of Bethlehem there arose an exceeding bitter cry.

Oh, what a cry it must have been! The cry of one mother mourning for her dead babe goes to the very heart; but here were hundreds of mothers wailing over children who have met with a sudden and bloody death.

But I think I hear you ask, Did they find the baby Jesus, and kill him?

No; God would not let them do that. He knew what the wicked king would do, so he took care that Jesus should be in a safe place far away.

The night after the Wise Men had left, God sent an angel to Joseph, and said to him, Rise from your bed, and get ready for a journey to Egypt. Take Mary and the baby away directly, for Herod will seek for the infant to kill him. I will tell you when it will be time for you to return home.

They quickly gathered their few possessions, and in the night they went through the village gate, and were soon far away in the desert.

Joseph and Mary and the Baby did not long live in Egypt, for Herod died very soon afterwards. Then God sent an angel to Joseph, as he had promised him, to tell him that now he might go back again, because they were dead who sought the young child's life.

But Joseph felt afraid to go and live at Bethlehem again, so he went back to his old home at Nazareth, in Galilee.

The country round about Nazareth is very beautiful, but what interests us most is not the beauty of the country so much as the thought that here the boyhood of Jesus was spent. We wonder how that boyhood was passed; what he said, and felt, espe-

cially about the world he had come to save. These questions cannot be answered. For twelve years the life of Jesus is wrapped in unbroken silence. We only know that he grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

When Jesus was about twelve years old Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover. This was a long journey from Nazareth, but it happened at a good season of the year, after the summer's heat and before the winter's rain began to fall. When the feast was over, Joseph and Mary set out on their return journey, but Jesus tarried in Jerusalem, and Joseph and Mary were some distance from Jerusalem before Jesus was missed. Not finding him among their kinsfolk and friends, they returned to Jerusalem, and after three days they found him in the temple among the teachers of the law, both hearing and asking them questions. And when they saw him they were amazed, and his mother said, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. Jesus answered, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? He would have his mother know that implicit obedience to his Heavenly Father was the first rule of his life. Still, although the Son of God, he yielded to them the true obedience of a son, and returned with them to Nazareth, where, we doubt not, he labored with Joseph at the carpenter's bench for his own support and that of the family.

For the next eighteen years there is silence re-

JOSEPH AND MARY FIND JESUS

specting the life of Jesus. We only know that he grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

If you had been living in the land of Palestine, thirty years after the birth of Christ, you would have heard of a man called John the Baptist.

He lived mostly among the wild places and desert parts of Judea, and by the river side of Jordan.

He wore the coarsest clothing, and lived on the plainest food. Yet he was a greater prophet than all those who had come before him. He was "a man sent from God" to prepare the Jews for the teaching of Jesus.

In Eastern countries, when a great person is going a journey, some one is sent before him—a forerunner—to see that the way is clear for him and his servants. The roads must be watered to lay the dust, the rough places must be made smooth, and all hindrances taken out of the way.

Up to this time Jesus had been living quietly with his parents at Nazareth. Now the time had come for him to begin to teach and to preach to the people.

Some time, however, before Jesus began his work, John told the Jews to get ready for the teaching of Jesus. Some one is coming who is greater than I am. He already stands among you, though you know him not. Put away, he cried, all that will hinder his coming to you. He is the Holy One of Israel, turn away from your sins. Repent! the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

These sayings of John roused the whole Jewish people. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS

Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The Pharisees and Sadducees, too, came to John. They were mostly proud men, who thought a great deal of themselves.

John was surprised to see them come, and said, Who has told you to flee from the wrath to come? You think you are safe because you are the children of faithful Abraham; but I tell you that each one of you must give up his sins, his pride, and all unrighteousness, or he can have no part in Messiah's kingdom; that kingdom is close at hand. Repent! for he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.

These plain words of John made the Pharisees angry—they thought themselves so much better than others, that they had no need to repent. But no one can enter the kingdom of Jesus unless he turns away from his sins.

I cannot tell you of all the people who came to John; but some there were who felt very sorry for their sins, and to them he spoke words of love and

JESUS WENT UP OUT OF THE WATER

peace. He told them to look to Jesus as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

CHAPTER III

CHRIST'S TEMPTATION—THE CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES—JESUS BEGINS HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY—THE MIRACLE OF THE FISHES—HIS FIRST MIRACLE AT CANA—DRIVES THE BUYERS AND SELLERS OUT OF THE TEMPLE—JESUS AND NICODEMUS.

BEFORE Jesus began to teach, he went into a place all alone. He stayed in the wilderness for forty days. The quiet of the desert was only broken by the roar of wild beasts, as they went about at night seeking for their food.

But Jesus was not afraid of them; he wanted to be all by himself, that he might pray to God, his Father, and think over the great work which he was so soon going to begin.

God kept him alive without food for the forty days that he was speaking to him, and thinking so earnestly. At the end of that time, Jesus was hungry. I dare say he felt very weak and weary from his long fasting. Now, thought Satan, will be a good time for me to try to make him do wrong. So he came to Jesus and said, You are very hungry, and there is no food to be had in this desert, but that will not matter. If you really are the Son of God you can soon turn these stones that lie around you into bread.

But Jesus said, No, I will not work a miracle only to please myself. I will trust to God to feed me in any way that he thinks fit. Man does not live by bread alone.

You see it was like meat and drink to Jesus to do the will of his Father.

Then Satan took Jesus to the temple at Jerusalem, to the top of a very high tower.

Now, said Satan, Throw yourself down; you will not be hurt, for God your Father will take care of you. It is said in the Scriptures, The angels shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said, No, I will not do as you wish. It is written in the Scriptures, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. God only works miracles for wise ends, not for the sake of making a wonder. Jesus teaches that we cannot expect our Father to take care of us, if we go into danger on purpose. He could come down from the tower by the steps in the usual way; he need not throw himself from the top, in order to reach the ground.

Satan now took Jesus to the top of a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. All these, said he, I will give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. You say you are to be King over all the earth; seek my help, and your kingdom shall be set up in the world, without any giving up of life and ease on your part.

But Jesus said, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. My kingdom is not one

of show and splendor; it is one in the hearts of men.

Then Satan went away. The holy Jesus would not yield to him when he tried to lead him into sin.

Adam and Eve listened to the Evil One, they believed his lies, and disobeyed God; but Christ, who is called the Second Adam, was tempted, and did not fall.

Satan comes to us all with just the temptation that he thinks we shall listen to. To one he says, I would not bear that cross word; give a hard word back again; and he tempts to revenge.

To another he whispers, Hide that fault; your mother will never know; and he tempts to deceit.

Or he may say, How diligent you are, when your companions are careless and idle; and he tempts to pride.

Oh, he has many ways of coming to us, but let us say, as Jesus did, Go away, Satan, I will not listen to your wicked teachings.

Jesus knows how hard it is to do right, when the devil tempts us to do wrong. One reason why he let the devil come to him was to teach us how to overcome temptations.

When the devil comes to tempt us, Jesus is by us, too, watching to see if we mind his words, and ready to help us to do right if we only ask him.

God sent help to Jesus as soon as Satan had gone away. We are told that angels came and brought him the food he so much needed. How glad they always were to do the least thing that he wanted.

You will often read in the New Testament of the

twelve disciples of Jesus. Do you know what the word disciple means? It means a learner. These twelve men were learners of Christ. All who learned of him were his disciples; but these twelve were with him always, and learned of him the most. They are called apostles, too, because Jesus sent them out into different parts of the country to teach others. The word apostle means "one who is sent."

The disciples were also the friends of Christ. He told them things about God and about himself that he did not tell people generally. They loved Jesus dearly, and he loved them, too, and took great pains to correct their mistakes, and to make them good.

Peter, James, and John are the three that we read most about. John was the disciple that was the most like his Master in spirit, and he was called "the disciple that Jesus loved."

One day John the Baptist was teaching his disciples or learners, when Jesus passed by. He was just talking to them about Jesus, and as he saw him looking so calm, so gentle, so meek, he said, Behold the Lamb of God! Two of John's disciples heard his words, and as they looked at Jesus, they felt the words were true; so they turned at once, and followed him.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when they went after Jesus. They did not speak to him, lest they should disturb him. Jesus knew that in their hearts they wanted to speak to him, so he turned round and said to them kindly, What is it you wish for?

They said, very timidly, Will you tell us where you live?

Jesus said, Come with me, and I will show you where I live.

Then they were very glad; this was just what they wanted, only they did not like to ask.

Jesus is the Greatest Teacher that has ever lived in this world, and yet he did not make himself very grand. No; it was always easy for any one who really wanted to be his disciple, to see him and to talk with him.

The names of these two young men were—John, who was afterwards called the beloved disciple; and Andrew. They spent all that evening with Jesus, and the more they saw of him the more they loved him: they felt quite sure now that he was the Son of God. They went and told some other young men what they knew about Jesus. Andrew went first of all to his own brother, Simon Peter, and said, We have found Christ. He brought him to Jesus, and Peter became one of Christ's disciples.

These young men lived by the Sea of Galilee, for they were fishermen.

One day, as Jesus was walking by the seashore, he saw two ships—one of them belonged to Peter. There were a great many people crowding round Jesus to hear him talk, so he said to Peter, Let me get into your empty ship, and push it away from the land a little way; then I shall be able to speak to the people, so that all can hear me.

Then Jesus taught the people out of the ship. When he had quite finished teaching, he said to Peter, Push your ship out now into deep water, and throw your nets down into the sea.

Peter said, Master, we have been trying all night

to catch fish and we have caught nothing, but as thou sayest, Throw in the net, I will do so.

Peter threw in the net, and at once it was full of fishes—so full that the net broke with their weight.

Then Peter called his partners, who were in the other ship, to come and help him. So James and John went to the ship and helped to pull up the net; and they filled both their ships with the fishes. When Peter saw their number he was astonished and frightened. He felt that Jesus was more than man to work such a miracle. He felt that he was a sinful man and not worthy to be so near to him, so he begged Jesus to go away from him.

Jesus told him not to be afraid because he had seen this wonderful draught of fishes. Have faith in me, and you will see me do yet more wonders, and I will teach you to bring men to know me too.

Peter and his partners, James and John, then brought their ships to land, and left them in care of some hired men, while they followed Jesus wherever he went.

They left all that they had, to go with him: there was nothing in the world that they cared for so much as to learn of him, and listen to his sayings.

I have now told you about John and James, who were brothers, and Simon Peter and Andrew, who were brothers.

There was one young man who lived in the same place with Andrew and Peter; his name was Philip.

Jesus said to him, Follow me.

At once he came: he knew that Jesus was the

Messiah for whom the Jews had so long been hoping.

Then there was Matthew, a tax-gatherer, who had often heard Jesus speak. One day Jesus said to him, Follow me.

He was very glad to hear Jesus ask him to come and be with him wherever he went; so he gave up all at Christ's bidding, and followed him.

At other times Jesus chose the rest of the twelve apostles. I have already told you of six,—James and John, Andrew and Peter, Philip and Matthew. Beside these there were Thomas, Bartholomew (who was the same as Nathanael), another James, Simon (called Zelotes), Judas or Jude, who wrote one of the epistles or letters in the Bible, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Christ.

We next find our Lord at Cana of Galilee where a marriage was being celebrated. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there, and he and his disciples were invited. The bride and bridegroom were poor people, and in the midst of the feast it turned out that there was not wine enough. Mary said, in a low voice, to her Son, They have no wine.

Now there were six great jars standing by, and Jesus told the servants to fill them with water. So they filled them up to the brim; and then he told the servants to draw out some of what they had poured in, and carry it to the chief person there.

As soon as this man had tasted it, he found it was such good wine that he said to the bridegroom that most people began their feasts with their best wine, but that here the best had been kept for the last. This was the first wonderful thing our Lord did on

earth, and it made his disciples know that he was God, for no one else could have done such a wonder. We call these wonders miracles. Our Lord worked many more while he was on earth, and most of them were cures to the blind, or the lame, or the sick. He made them well directly by his power and love.

After this Jesus went with his mother and disciples to Capernaum, a city on the Sea of Galilee, and there they remained a few days until the time for going up to Jerusalem to keep the feast of the Passover.

This was Jesus's first visit to Jerusalem since his baptism. On going into the temple he found three men selling oxen, sheep and doves; also the changers of money. And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them out of the temple with it, saying, Take these things hence: make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

And when the Jews asked him for a sign that he had a right to do this, he replied, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? Jesus spake of the temple of his body, but they did not understand. Neither did his disciples at that time, but after the resurrection they remembered his words.

During the Passover week Jesus wrought many miracles, and many believed on him because of the miracles, but their faith was weak.

The Pharisees, as I told you before, were a party

among the Jews, who were mostly rich and learned men. They were also very proud, and thought themselves much better than other people. Their outward conduct was very strict, but in general their hearts were full of self-glorying and unkind thoughts of others.

They thought that when Messiah came he would be a king, just like other kings on earth; and that he would be sure to give them the chief places in his kingdom, and make much of them.

Now Messiah has come. He is Jesus of Nazareth. He has gone from the Sea of Galilee, where he called some of his disciples; and he is working miracles, and is teaching in Jerusalem. The Pharisees look on, but they say, This new teacher is only the son of a carpenter. *He* cannot be the Christ.

They turn away, and talk among themselves, and say, This man from Nazareth teaches strange things. He says God is his Father. And then see how he cures all manner of diseases. If he were but rich, we might think he was the King of Israel; but that cannot be. His disciples are only poor fishermen: we do not know that any rich men will believe in him.

But there was one among them, named Nicodemus, who, when he reached his home that day, thought over all that he had seen and heard of Jesus.

He thought to himself, I cannot understand this new teacher: I should like to talk to him all alone. I will go and see him, but I will wait till it is dark, for I should not like any to know that I went to learn of him.

So, when all was still in the streets of Jerusalem,

JESUS TURNS WATER INTO WINE

Nicodemus quietly left his home, and went to the house where Jesus was staying.

He knocked at the door, and asked for Jesus. Jesus did not say, I am tired with teaching all day; you must go away, and let me rest now. Besides, if you are ashamed to be seen talking to me, I will have nothing to say to you. No; Jesus was always courteous, and always ready for his great work: he at once listened to what Nicodemus had to say.

Master, he said, I know you must be sent from God to teach men, for no one could do the wonders that you do if God did not give him the power.

I *am* from God, said Jesus; I have come to set up his kingdom on earth, but not the kind of kingdom that you expect—not one that you can see, nor one of earthly grandeur. Do not think that *because* you are a Jew and a Pharisee, you will have a share in my kingdom. I tell your truly, that unless you are born again you can have no part in it.

Born again! cried Nicodemus: what does that mean?

Yes, said Jesus; I speak the truth. God's Spirit must change a man's heart before he will be able to enter that kingdom. A man naturally loves to please himself; but, in the new life that God gives, he will be quite changed, for he will seek to please God, and care for that which *he* thinks much of. He is like another man, after he listens to and obeys God's Spirit.

Jesus answered: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

The beloved disciple, St. John, says: After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of

JESUS CLEANSES THE TEMPLE

Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ænon, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized.

Nicodemus looked very much astonished.

Jesus said, Do not wonder, Nicodemus, at my saying, You must be born again. I know it is difficult to understand all about a man's soul. You can see what God's Spirit does. When you see the proud grow humble, the angry grow meek, the selfish grow loving—then you see the work of God's Spirit. You can see the same man changed into a new man, as if he were indeed born again.

Again Nicodemus asked, How can it be?

Jesus said, Are you a teacher in Israel, and do you not understand these things. God's way of saving men is not as you think. You think that the Messiah will come and reign over the Jews with greater splendor than Solomon of old; but I tell you that the Messiah will have to suffer and die, and that it will be through his death that the whole world, and not the Jews only, will be saved.

You may not understand this yet, but by and by you will see more plainly God's great love to the world in sending his son to die for it.

Nicodemus then left Jesus. We may be quite sure that he never forgot the conversation of that night, and that he thought of it three years afterwards, when he saw Jesus lifted up on the cross, dying to give life to the world.

I dare say he often came to Jesus to speak with him, after this first visit, and that he learned to love him very much. When Jesus was dead, he brought

costly spices to embalm his body; a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. What a change from the Nicodemus, who at the first came to Jesus by night.

Children! do not say, I am sure to go to heaven, because I am born in a Christian land, of pious parents. Unless your hearts are made new by God's Spirit, you *cannot* enter there. You *must be born again*. God waits to give you his Spirit. He says, Ask and ye shall have. Will you not pray, O Lord, for Jesus's sake, give me thy Holy Spirit?

CHAPTER IV

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN—JESUS HEALS THE NOBLEMAN'S SON—TEACHES IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH — STILLING THE TEMPEST — AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT CAST OUT.

THE Pharisees in Jerusalem were very angry with Jesus because many people, seeing the wonders that he did, believed on him. They would not love him themselves, because he reproved their pride, and did not teach the things that they did. Jesus, seeing their dislike to him, said to his disciples, We will go back to Galilee, and leave Jerusalem for a little time.

It would take three days to go from Jerusalem to Galilee, straight through the country of Samaria; and this was the road that Jesus now took.

When they came near a city of Samaria, called

Sychar or Shechem; Jesus sat down by the well outside the city.

He was very tired, and hot and thirsty, so he rested there while his disciples went into the city to buy some food.

It was about twelve o'clock at noon when a woman came to the well to draw some water, and saw Jesus sitting there alone.

He asked her for some water; she gave it, but said, How is it that you ask me to give you water, for you are a Jew, and I am a woman of Samaria? The proud Jews are not willing to take anything from the despised Samaritans.

Jesus said, You do not know who I am. I have taken some water from you, but if you knew me, you would ask me to give you some ever-springing, living water.

Sir, said she, how do you get this water? You have no pitcher with you to draw it up, and the well is deep.

Jesus said, I am not speaking of the water at the bottom of this well, for those who drink of this water will thirst again. But he that drinks of the water that I will give shall never thirst, for it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The woman was glad to hear of water ever fresh, ever springing up, which she could always carry with her. There would be no need then for weary, hot, dusty walks from the city to the well. Not to thirst again! What a delightful thought in that hot country!

She did not quite understand yet that it was not

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

real water that Jesus was speaking about. It was life in the soul he meant.

When you are very hot and thirsty, do you not long for pure, cool water? And when you have drunk as much as you want, do you not feel refreshed and strong?

And have you not sometimes felt very tired of naughty ways, and longed to be good, as you long for water when you are thirsty?

As water satisfies the thirst of the body, so will Jesus satisfy the thirst of your soul for goodness.

I cannot altogether explain how, for you must learn this of yourself; the well of living water is *in* you, Jesus says.

Go to him, and ask him to take away sin, which is like death to the soul, and he will give you life, and strength to be good.

Jesus then went on talking to the woman about her past life.

She said, Sir, you must be a prophet to know so much about me, for you have never seen me before.

Jesus told her he was more than a prophet, he was the Messiah—the Christ promised to the world so long ago.

The woman then left her pitcher, and ran back to the city to tell her neighbors that she had found the promised Christ.

While she was gone, the disciples, who had by this time come back from Sychar with the food they had bought, said, Master, why do you not eat?

They had left Jesus hungry and tired, and now he did not seem to notice the food they offered him.

They thought that perhaps some one had given him something to eat.

He then explained to them that he had been so busy that he had forgotten his hunger. It was meat and drink to him to do his heavenly Father's will.

The woman came back again with many more people, and they asked Jesus if he would stay in their city a little while. Jesus stopped two days, teaching them and answering their questions; and the people said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of what you have said, for we have heard him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

After two days, Jesus and his disciples left Sychar, and continued their journey to Galilee.

There was great sorrow in the house of a nobleman at Capernaum, for one of his children was very ill. In vain did the doctors come, for no medicine would cure him; and the parents, in deep grief, watched the progress of the fever.

At last some one said, Jesus of Nazareth has returned from Jerusalem; he is now at Cana, perhaps he will make the child well.

Cana was not far from Capernaum, so the nobleman said, I will go at once to Jesus, and see if he will come here to heal my son.

He soon found Jesus, for his fame was very great; and he begged him very earnestly to go back with him at once to Capernaum before the child was dead.

He believed that when Jesus saw him, he could cure him, but he thought if the child was dead, then even *he* could do nothing.

Jesus now showed the nobleman that he had more power than he thought—God had put into the hands of his Son power to do any miracle.

Jesus could make the child well again, if he stayed at Cana, just as easily as if he went to Capernaum and saw him.

He said to the poor troubled father, Go home again, your son is cured.

The nobleman believed that Jesus had cured his son, when he spake these words; so he turned to go home again.

On the way back to Capernaum he met some of his servants, who were bringing him the good news that his son was better.

When did he begin to get well? the father asked.

They replied, Yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him.

The father knew that that was the exact time when Jesus had told him his son should live. Now he knew that Jesus could do anything. He and all his family, when they saw the kindness and power of Jesus in sending health to this sick child, knew that he must be the Son of God.

The fame of Jesus now grew exceedingly. They who had sick friends brought them to Jesus, and he healed them all. No disease was too bad, no one had been ill too long, for Jesus to cure.

You would have thought that all men would have loved him; but they did not.

About this time Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had spent his childhood and youth.

The people there had heard of his miracles, and all eyes were turned on him one Sabbath day, when

he entered the synagogue, or Jewish place of worship.

He took the roll of parchment on which the prophecies were written, which they handed to him to read aloud to them. He unrolled the scroll, and read from Isaiah (lxi. 1). It was where the prophet was telling how in time to come, God would send Messiah to preach good news to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to set the captives free, to give sight to the blind. After Jesus had read these words, he closed the scroll and sat down. Every one looked up in astonishment and in silence.

Jesus then said, *I* am the Messiah of whom the prophet speaks. I am come for the very purpose to set men free from the power of Satan and from habits of sin. I am come to bring light to the minds of men, by teaching them about God. I am come to speak words of pardon and comfort to those who are sorry for their sin.

At first, all who heard Jesus speak wondered very much that a man whom they had known from a little child should say that he came to do these great things.

They said, Is he not the son of Joseph? we cannot believe him.

They said Jesus was a false teacher, and they did not want these gifts. They did not feel their sins a burden, they did not think themselves ignorant of God.

If he had said, I am come to make the Jews a great nation; I am come to give you riches; I am come to give you fame; I am come to give you the good things of this life; they would have listened.

They did not want to be saved from sin, so they refused the Saviour, and they would have killed him at once, had not he hid himself from them.

He was willing to die, but the right time was not yet come. He had more wonders to do, more people to cure, and many more to teach, before he laid down his life for the sins of the world.

Jesus had no home of his own while he lived on earth. One day a man came to him, and said that he would go with Jesus wherever he went.

Jesus said, I have no home for you to come to. The foxes have their holes to live in, the birds are warm in their little nests, but I have no place to call my own where I can lay my head.

Was it not wonderful love of Jesus, to leave his bright home in heaven to come and live on earth without a place of rest?

About this time he most likely lived in Peter's house at Capernaum, by the lake of Gennesaret.

He would often go into the ships of his disciples while they caught their fish, and he would sometimes teach the people on the shore while he sat in a ship close by.

One evening Jesus said that he should like to cross over to the other side of the lake. Then he and his disciples, and a few more men, went into a ship.

All at once a strong wind began to blow, and the water became very rough.

Now the waves get stronger and stronger, and rise higher and higher, till they dash over the little ship. The wind roars, and a black tempest darkens the sky.

JESUS TEACHES THE PEOPLE ON THE SHORE

Though the men on board were used to the sea, they could not manage the vessel in this terrible storm. The waves begin to fill the ship with water, and in great alarm the disciples went to Jesus. Where was he all this time? He was fast asleep. He was very tired, for he had been teaching a great many people all day long; and as soon as he got into the ship he went to the farther end of it, and laid his head upon a pillow, and the movement of the vessel soon rocked him to sleep.

The noise of the wind and the waves had not awaked him, but he awoke at once when he heard the voice of his disciples asking his help.

Master, Master, they cried, we perish! Do you not care for us? O Lord, save us!

He arose at once, and said to the wind, Be still, and then he turned to the waves, and said, Be still.

And the noisy wind heard that calm voice above all its roar, and was hushed to stillness; and the raging waves listened to the commands of their Lord and Master, and became smooth and quiet.

The angry storm, at one word from Jesus, changed to a great calm.

The men in the ship feared exceedingly. Who could he be who could make even the wind and the sea obey his voice? They might well say, that "God alone could do that." Jesus is God as well as man, and that is why all things in nature owned his power.

When Jesus had quieted the fears of his disciples, he gently reproved them for their want of faith in him.

Why were you afraid, O, ye of little faith? he

JESUS CALMS THE WINDS AND THE WAVES

said. You should have believed that I would have taken care of you. I knew that you were tossed about, though I was asleep.

It is not only raging seas that Jesus calms; he can still the angry passions of men, too.

Have you never felt something like a storm within you, when conscience begged you not to yield to the power of evil habits—when a sudden wish to do wrong was met by the thought, "How can I thus sin?" In that hour of strife between good and evil, turn to Jesus and ask his help. He will send a calm, for the evil will flee at his presence, and leave you strong for good.

You will often read in the New Testament about Jesus curing people who were possessed with devils. We can hardly tell you what this sad disease was that Jesus cured. It seemed to be a kind of madness, in which people lost their senses, and fancied that an evil spirit lived within them, making them do dreadful things.

A poor man who was thus afflicted lived at the little town at which Jesus landed after he had stilled the tempest. This poor man lived among the dreary gravestones and old tombs of the wilderness. He was very fierce, and men were afraid to pass by the place where he was. It was no use to chain him, for he broke his chains to pieces, and got loose again. There he was all day and all night, in lonely places, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Hearing the noise of the landing of the vessel, he turned and saw Jesus and his disciples come out of the ship.

He ran to meet Jesus, and fell down at his feet, and cried very loud.

Jesus told the evil spirits to come out of the man.

The evil spirits said, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come to punish us before the judgment-day?

Jesus now spoke to the *man,* and said, What is your name?

The devils would not let the man speak; they answered their name was Legion, which means many. They said to Jesus, Do not make us leave the man, but if you do cast us out, let us go into the swine that are feeding on the hills.

Jesus now spoke to the evil spirits, and told them they might go.

Then the devils went out of the man and entered into the swine, and the herd ran down the mountain-side into the sea, and were drowned.

The man was now quite cured, and could listen to Jesus. He was in his right mind. He felt so loving and grateful to Jesus for making him well, that he wished to follow him everywhere.

Jesus said, No, go to your home, and tell all your friends what great things God hath done for you.

The people who saw this wonderful cure were afraid of Jesus, and begged him to go away. Did they suppose the gentle Jesus ever harmed any one? His power was always used for mercy; it was only used against disease, and sin, and evil.

At another time a poor man was brought to Jesus, who was troubled with an evil spirit that made him deaf and dumb.

Jesus told the devil to leave the man, and he did so.

When he was gone, the poor man could both hear and speak.

All who saw the cure, wondered, and said, This Jesus must be the Son of God.

The Pharisees did not like to hear Jesus praised, for they hated him, and were wicked enough to say that his great power was given to him by Satan. "It is by the help of the Evil One that he casts out devils."

Jesus told them that Satan would not cast out Satan, that evil would not fight against evil. Evil could not do good, and good could come only from God.

If, he said, it is thus God's power that cures these poor people, then is God very near to you, and I warn you to believe my teachings. But the Pharisees only hated Jesus the more, because they knew he spoke the truth.

CHAPTER V

THE RAISING OF JARIUS' DAUGHTER—THE HEALING OF THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED THE HEM OF JESUS' GARMENT—THE WIDOW'S SON—OTHER MIRACLES OF HEALING—A WOMAN WASHES JESUS' FEET WITH HER TEARS.

JESUS crossed the lake again and came to Capernaum. A large crowd of people were waiting for him. They asked him a great many questions.

The Pharisees were always trying to find fault with what Jesus did. They said to his disciples, How is it that your Master goes to the houses of wicked people, and eats and drinks with them? He keeps bad company.

Jesus heard them speaking to his disciples, so he turned to them and said, You do not send a doctor to a man who is quite well, but you send him to a sick man. So I go to those whose souls are sick, that I may cure them; I go to sinners, to make them good. You proud Pharisees say that you are righteous, so you feel no need of me; if you felt your need of a Saviour, I would come to you too.

The Pharisees were as bad in their hearts as those who were plainly sinners, but they were like a man who is ill, and does not know it, and will not own it, and so will not send for a doctor.

The soul of every one, even of a child, is sick because it is sinful; will you not ask Jesus to cure yours and make it well, by making you good?

While Jesus was busy talking to different people, a man named Jairus came to him, and kneeled at his feet, and begged him very earnestly to come to his house directly.

He said, I have only one little daughter; she is twelve years old, and she is dying. Come, I pray you, at once, and put your hand on her, and make her well again.

Jesus then rose up to go with the sorrowing father. His disciples went with him, and a great crowd of people besides.

After they had walked on a short distance, Jesus turned round and said, Who touched my clothes?

Those nearest to Jesus all said that they had not touched him.

Then Peter said, Master, how is it you ask who touched you? The crowd is so great, that it is no wonder if some one has pressed against you.

Yes, said Jesus; but somebody has touched my clothes on purpose to be healed by touching them. Who is it?

Then there came from among the crowd a poor woman, and she fell down at the feet of Jesus, and said, It was I, Lord.

She said, I have been very ill for twelve years, and I have gone from one doctor to another to be cured, but all in vain. I have suffered a great deal of pain, and I get worse rather than better, and I have spent all my money. I heard of you, Lord, and how you cured all manner of diseases; so I thought if I could but touch the hem of your garment I should be made well at once. It has been, too, exactly as I hoped, for the moment I touched you I felt quite well.

The poor woman trembled very much all the while she was speaking to Jesus, for she was afraid that he would think that she had been too bold.

But Jesus spoke to her very kindly, and told her that he was very much pleased with her faith in him. Daughter, he said, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole: go home in peace.

Just then some one came with a message from the house of Jairus, and said to him, Your daughter is dead, do not trouble the Master any further, for nothing can be done for her now.

Jesus told the poor father not to be cast down at

JAIRUS' DAUGHTER IS BROUGHT TO LIFE

the sad news: Be not afraid, only believe in my power, and she shall be made well again.

At the door of the house the mother meets them, and a crowd of curious persons seek to enter the house with Jesus and his disciples. But Jesus will not let any one come in but Peter, James, and John. They then, with the father and mother of the little girl, go into the room where she lies dead. Already a great many people were in the room who were paid, as was then the custom, to play sad music, and sing sad songs, and make a great crying over the dead body.

Jesus said to them, Do not weep; the child is not dead, she is only sleeping.

Jesus meant that her death would be as a sleep to her, for he could raise her out of it.

These people did not wait to see what Jesus would do, but laughed at him rudely, and said, She is dead; you cannot make her alive now.

Jesus put them all out of the room, for they were not worthy to see the great work he was going to perform.

When the noisy mourners were gone, and he was alone with the father and mother, and Peter, James, and John, he took the hand of the little girl. Then he said unto her, Maiden, I say to thee, arise!

And the dead body heard the voice of him who is the Life of the World, and she arose and walked about the room.

Jesus said to her parents, Give her something to eat; you see she is really alive and well.

The parents were greatly pleased to have their little girl well again; and they and all who heard

about it, were very much surprised indeed at this wonderful miracle.

I dare say that you have often met a funeral when you have been out walking. Is it not a sad sight to see the mourners following to the grave the body of a dear friend?

Once, when Jesus was walking along the road, he saw a funeral coming out at the gates of the little town of Nain.

A great many people were walking after Jesus, for they liked to hear him talk, and they also liked to see the wonderful things which he was constantly doing.

By and by, they came close up to the funeral procession; it was a very long one. All the people who followed the dead body seemed to be grieving very much indeed. It was a young man that they were carrying to the grave. He was lying on a bier, which is something like a coffin without a lid.

One poor woman was crying very much, for she was the mother of that young man, and he was her only son: she was a widow too, and now she was very sad and lonely.

Everybody felt very sorry for her, but no one had any power to take away her trouble. When Jesus saw her, he felt very sorry too, and he had power to help her, and make her glad again. He said to her very gently, Weep not.

He then went to the bier, and touched it; and those who were carrying it stood still, and all the crowd also stood still.

No one spoke, but every one thought, What will the Master do?

His disciples knew he could raise the dead, as well as cure the sick; but perhaps many thought, It is of no use to stop the funeral, for he cannot make the dead hear his voice; they are past cure.

Oh, what a time of hope and fear was that!

Then Jesus spoke to the dead body, Young man, I say unto thee, arise!

Will he hear? Oh, yes! death obeys the voice of its Lord, and at once, he that was dead sat up and began to speak.

Then Jesus, with great grace and kindness, gave him to his mother, and said, Here is your son alive again.

So this funeral procession was changed into a joyful company, and every one wondered at the great work that Jesus had just done.

He has raised a dead man to life again, people said, and the news spread in all the country round. Many people praised God for sending such a great prophet among them. Surely, they said, God hath visited his people.

The fame of the wonderful works of Jesus spread everywhere, and many people wanted to see the man about whom every one was talking.

One day a rich, proud Pharisee, named Simon, asked Jesus to come and dine with him. I am afraid he only asked him to come because he wanted to hear him talk, and not because he loved him.

However, Jesus told Simon that he would come.

When Jesus went, Simon treated him with great neglect; he did not honor Jesus as his guest. He ought to have brought him some water to wash his feet, as this was the first thing that was done on

THE WIDOW'S SON IS BROUGHT TO LIFE

coming into a house. As people in those countries only wore sandals, and not shoes, their feet would be very dusty after walking, and it was necessary to their comfort that they should often wash their feet. Then he should have given him some sweet ointment, and also a kiss of welcome, which means nearly the same thing as our shake of the hands.

But Simon paid none of these attentions to Jesus. Perhaps he thought that he was doing the Lord a great favor by asking him to come to his house.

When Jesus sat down to dinner, a woman came into the room.

She had heard that Jesus was in this rich man's house, and she came to the place where he was reclining, and stood at his feet.

She began to cry, for she had been very wrong and wicked, and she longed to hear Jesus pardon her sins. She knew he would forgive her if she could but ask him, as she was very sorry, and wished to forsake her sins. She loved him dearly, and she felt sure that he would not send her away unforgiven.

Her tears fell fast—like a shower of rain on the feet of Jesus, and so she washed them.

She then wiped them dry with her long hair, and kissed his feet many times.

She then opened a box that she had brought with her. It was a box of alabaster, a kind of pure white marble, and in it was some sweet, precious ointment. This she rubbed on the feet of Jesus.

While she was doing this Simon looked on, and he was very much surprised that Jesus would even let the woman touch him.

He said to himself, for he did not dare say it out loud, This Jesus is no prophet. If he were, he would know how wicked this woman has been, and he would have nothing to do with her; he would send her quite away.

But Jesus did know, and he knew too what was passing in Simon's thoughts. He turned to him, and said, Simon, I have something to say to you.

Simon said, Master, what is it?

There was once a person to whom two men owed some money. One man only owed a little, the other owed a great deal. They had neither of them any money at all with which to pay their debts. Then the man to whom they owed the money forgave them both, and said they need not pay anything. Tell me now which of these two men will love him the most?

Simon said, I suppose that he who owed the most, and who had most forgiven, will love the most.

Yes, said Jesus, that is quite right. He then turned to the woman, and said to Simon, Do you see this woman?

Yes, said Simon.

When I came to your house, you gave me no water to wash my feet; but she has washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave me no kiss of welcome, but she has kissed my feet ever since she has been here. You poured no sweet oil upon my head, but she has rubbed my feet with precious ointment. She has done a great many sinful things, but I have forgiven her, and she loves me very much. You think that

you have not much to be forgiven, so you only love me a very little.

Jesus then turned to the woman, and said to her in the kindest tones, Your many sins are all forgiven you. You believed I would forgive you, and I have done so: go to your home in peace.

The poor woman went away comforted at heart by these kind words of Jesus, but the people who were sitting at table with Jesus were very angry indeed.

They would not believe that he could forgive sins, and they thought that he was taking on himself the power of God when he forgave the woman.

Who are you, that you should forgive sin? they said to Jesus.

The poor sinful woman was wiser than the proud, self-righteous Pharisee. She knew that Jesus could pardon sin, for she felt he *had* done so by the peace that he had given her.

Jesus will pardon your sins if you confess them, and forsake them. Of course he will not forgive you, if you think yourself very good, as the Pharisee did. He does not love the proud, but he does love those who are sorry for their sin, and he will give them sweet comforting words of pardon.

CHAPTER VI

THE PARABLES—THE PRODIGAL SON—THE LOST SHEEP AND THE LOST MONEY.

JESUS often taught people by parables. Do you know what a parable is? It is a kind of story, in which something is explained by showing what it is like.

We will tell you one of Christ's parables so you can see what is meant.

Jesus wanted people to know what love God felt for all those who were sorry for sin, and he showed them what that love was like, by the love of an earthly father for his naughty but repentant son.

He said, There was a man once who had two sons.

One day, the younger son said to his father, Father, give me my share of your money and goods.

Then the father divided all that he had between his two sons.

Not many days after this, the younger son put all his things together, and took them and his money with him, and went on a long journey into a country a great way off. He wished to get as far from his good father as he possibly could, for he knew he would not like to see how badly he went on.

He kept rude, bad company, and ate and drank a great deal, and not only spent his money, but wasted it in a great many wicked ways.

At last his money and his goods were quite gone, and there was a great famine, or scarcity of food, in all the country.

He began to want for bread.

His old companions would not help him. Now that he had no money to spend, they left him all alone.

He could not starve. What should he do?

He went to a man, and asked him to give him some work, so that he might earn something to eat.

The man said, I have no work to give you unless you like to go into the fields to feed the herds of swine.

There was nothing that a Jew hated worse than to keep pigs. Only the very lowest and the very poorest would do such a thing.

But this young man, though he had once been rich, and had fared sumptuously, was glad to do it, and even to eat of the coarse food that he gave to the pigs. This was a kind of pulse or pea.

No one gave him anything else to eat.

Sad, starving, and almost naked, he began to think of his disgrace, misery, and degradation.

He thought of his old home, of his kind father, of his folly in leaving him, and wanting to do as he liked. Then he thought of all the unhappiness his wicked ways had brought him to, how his money was gone, and he had nothing left, and how not one of his sinful companions would help him now that he was in trouble.

Then he thought of the servants in his father's house; even they were better off than he was. They

had food enough and to spare, while he was dying of hunger.

Then he said, Why should I stop here? I will go back to my father, and say, Father, I have sinned against God, and against you. I know I am not worthy to be called your son, but let me come to your house and be a servant.

So he began to go back to his father, and at last he came within sight of his father's house, but as yet he was a great way off.

The father happened to be looking along the road by which his son had gone away when he left his home. I dare say he was wondering what had become of him, he had not heard of him for so long. Perhaps he was wishing he could hear something about him, for he did not know whether he was alive or dead. At last he sees a poor ragged man walking in the distance: he comes nearer and nearer, he seems coming to the house. The poor ragged man is just about as tall as his youngest son, he is something like him too. Can it be his son come back, poor and wretched? Yes, it is; he knows him now, notwithstanding his rags and his half-starved look. Oh, how glad he feels! he runs at once to meet him. His heart is full of pity for his poor son. As soon as he comes up to him, and before the son can say one word, he throws his arms around his neck and kisses him.

Father, says the son, in a voice so full of grief that the father can only just hear him speak: Father, I have sinned against God in heaven, and against you. I do not deserve to be called your son.

The father tells his servants to bring him not

merely clothes, but *the best robe;* and to put a ring on his hand, as a mark of honor, and shoes on his feet.

He said, Get ready the best food too; kill the fatted calf, for we will have a feast and be merry. I thought my son was dead, but he is here alive; I thought he was lost, but now he is found.

Now his elder son drew nigh, and heard music and dancing. And he was angry, and would not go in, and said to his father, Lo, these many years have I served thee, and have not transgressed; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. And the father said, Son, thou art ever with me. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

This parable is one of the most affecting, instructive, and encouraging in the New Testament; and the pathos and divine simplicity of the narrative are unsurpassed in the sacred writings. Let us, realizing its meaning, take the good intended in it, and return to our Heavenly Father, who is the merciful receiver of all truly penitent sinners. The Scribes and Pharisees had, as usual, been murmuring at the condescending goodness of the great Shepherd to the wandering sheep of the Jewish fold, saying, This man receiveth sinners.

You who do many naughty things, you go a long way from God, and put him out of your thoughts, as the young man went into a far country, to forget his father, and be out of his sight.

When you begin to think of the kind and good God whose commands you have broken, and feel

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON

sorry that you have grieved him by your naughty ways, then you are like the young man when he began to think of his father and his sins.

When you think, "I will go to God, and tell him I have sinned, and am most unworthy of his love," then you are like the young man when he said that he would go back to his father.

But will God hear me when I go to him? Will he love me again, notwithstanding all my sins? Will he indeed forgive me?

That was the truth that Jesus wanted to teach. Yes; did not the earthly father take back his son in the most loving way to his home and heart?

So God rejoices to see any sinner returning to him: he waits to be gracious. God's heart is kinder and more tender than any earthly father's heart.

Jesus had lived in Heaven before he came to earth, and he knew how forgivingly the Heavenly Father receives the repentant sinner. He came to show us the Father.

God can show us his fatherly love, because Jesus died to bring us near to God, and because he bore the chastisement which our sins had deserved.

But what about the jealous elder brother? He was like the Pharisees who outwardly obeyed God, but had no love in their hearts, and had no pity for those who did wrong, even when they were sorry for it.

In the parable of the repenting son, Jesus showed how God feels to those who are sorry for their sins.

In the parables of the lost sheep and of the lost money, he shows how the angels feel when men turn away from sin and pray to God.

Jesus said, There was once a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. He counted them over one day, and there were but ninety-nine; one was missing. He left the ninety-nine sheep and went looking over the mountains to try to find the lost one. At last, to his great joy, he found it. He laid it across his shoulders, and brought it back to the flock. He then called all his friends together, and said to them, Be glad with me, for I have found my lost sheep.

It seemed dearer to him, now that he had found it, than the ninety-nine sheep which had never strayed away.

There was a woman who had ten pieces of silver money. She lost one of the ten pieces. She swept her room all over to try to find it. Then she lit a candle, so that she might search into every corner. At last she found it, and that one piece seemed more precious to her than all the other nine.

She called her friends together and said, Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost money.

As the shepherd rejoiced over his lost sheep when he found it, as the woman rejoiced over her lost money when she found it, so the angels rejoice over the return of even one lost soul to God.

Why are the angels so glad?

Because they know what a soul is worth. All the riches of the whole world are of no value compared with the soul of one little child.

Yet people often think but little of their souls. Not so the angels.

They know so well what a dreadful thing it is to be lost. They know the awful state of those angels whom God turned out of Heaven because they

sinned, and who now live in the dwelling-place of lost spirits. They grieve to think that anybody on earth should go there. They know that all those who do not love God cannot live with him in heaven; so they all rejoiced when any one turns away from sinful ways, and prays to God.

Heaven is their home, they have always lived there, and they know what a blessed place it is. That is why they are glad to think of any one coming to live with them in Heaven.

In the dreary winter, when it is snowing fast, when the wind blows coldly, while you are sitting round a blazing fire in a comfortable home, with kind friends all around you, do you ever think of those who have no home, no friends, no comforts?

If you do, do you not wish that they could have such a happy home as yours?

So the angels look on us, as we wander away from our home in Heaven, and from God our Father.

They think of the poor straying sheep losing itself in the desert wilds, and oh, how glad they are when it is found!

You have strayed away from the fold of God, down into the paths of sin. Jesus is the good shepherd who seeks to save you. Will you not ask him to bring you back again into holy ways, into the fold of God? Will you not let the angels of Heaven rejoice over you because you are not going to be lost?

Or will you let Satan and the wicked spirits rejoice to think, that by your sinful ways, you are getting more and more like them, and will one day come and live with them for ever?

CHAPTER VII

THE LORD'S PRAYER—THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

JESUS often liked to be alone, that he might pray to his Father.

He would go sometimes to the quiet mountain top, and spend the whole night in talking to and thinking of God.

One day when he had finished praying, his disciples came to him and said,—

Lord, will you teach us to pray?

Jesus then taught them a short prayer. It was the prayer which we call "The Lord's Prayer." I dare say you all know it:—

"Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."

This is not an easy prayer for little children, but even they may understand some of its meaning.

It begins, "Our Father who art in Heaven."

God is our Father because he made us; but he is more our Father because Jesus died to make us his children. It is through Jesus that we dare to call God "Father." He is our Father in Heaven, so we must trust him with reverence. Heaven seems near to us when we pray.

"Hallowed be thy name," means, Let God's name be honored.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." How is God's will done in Heaven? It is done always, it is done cheerfully, it is done perfectly. How is God's will done on earth? Alas! only a few do it at all, and even those who do it best, do it very imperfectly. But most men only do their own will, or Satan's will, so we may well pray, "*Thy* will be done."

"Give us day by day our daily bread." It is God who gives us our daily food, and we may ask him for that which is necessary for us.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." What are trespasses? They are sins. I have heard one little child say to another who has done him a wrong, I don't love you, and I won't forgive you. Have you ever said so? I suppose you would like God to forgive you your sins? You have sinned more against God than ever a brother could sin against you. What if God should turn away his face from you; how unhappy it would make you feel!

Jesus said, If you will not forgive those who sin against you, your Heavenly Father cannot forgive you your sins against him.

Before you pray to be forgiven, in your heart forgive all those who have done wrong to you; then will your Heavenly Father also forgive you.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." This is a prayer to God to keep us from listening to Satan, who is often watching us and

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

trying to tempt us to do evil. We are so weak that we ask God to help us and save us.

He says, That if poor sinful people know how to give good things to their children, how much more willingly does God give his good Spirit to them that ask him.

When Jesus had finished this prayer, he said to his disciples, You may ask God for anything you want, it shall be given you.

Then he said, Suppose a little boy should come to his father, and say, Father, I am hungry, will you give me some bread?

Do you think the father would give him a stone instead?

No; no kind father would give his child what he knows he cannot eat.

Do you think then that God will give us what is of no use to us, instead of something that we have asked him for, and that we want very much ir deed? Oh, no.

Then Jesus said, Suppose a child should say, Father, will you give me some fish? would he give him a serpent? Or if he said, Father will you give me an egg? would he give him a scorpion?

No, you know that no father would give poisonous, hurtful things to a dear child, when he asked him for food.

Dear children, your father knows how to give you good things, but he would not give you things that were *not* good for you.

Your father knows how to give you *good* things, but God only can give you the *best* things.

Your father can give you a house to live in, and

clothes, and food, and toys, and money, perhaps, but God can give you his Holy Spirit. Why is this the best of all? Because the Holy Spirit will teach you to be good, and if you are good you will be happy. It is better to be good than to have all the fine things in the world; if you are good you will be like God, and live one day with him for ever, and that will be best of all.

One summer morning, Jesus sat down upon a mountain plain, and called his disciples around him. There were a great many people there besides, and they all listened to the most wonderful sermon ever preached.

We will not tell you all that Christ said, for you cannot understand it all yet.

Though the sermon was long, the people who heard it were not tired, and they went away saying, What wonderful teaching is this of Jesus! He speaks as if he knew more than any other teacher that we ever heard.

Jesus began by telling them who the happy people were.

He did not say, Blessed are the great, the rich, the famous. No; he taught them, saying, Blessed are those who feel that they are poor, and helpless, and wretched.

Blessed are those who grieve over their sins, and wish they were better and holier than they are.

Blessed are the meek and gentle-spirited.

Blessed are those who long to be quite good, as a hungry and thirsty man longs for food and drink.

Blessed are the merciful and kind-hearted.

Blessed are those who wish to be good in their hearts, to *feel* right as well as to do right.

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.

If you see any of your companions quarrelling, can *you* not be a little peace-maker between the two angry ones, by saying gentle, loving words to each?

Jesus said, You, my disciples, must be like a light in a dark place, you must be so good, that men may learn of you to love God and goodness. Your goodness must not be like that of the Pharisees, for they do right that men may praise them. They are like a cup that is washed clean outside, but is unwashed and dirty inside. They do not care about having sinful thoughts and feelings, as men cannot see into their hearts. You must do right, not that men may say, How good you are, but that God, your Heavenly Father, may be praised by your goodness.

Then Jesus said, You must be kind and forgiving to one another. I do not mean only to those who are kind and loving to you, but even to those who are unkind, and are your enemies. You must be like your Father in Heaven, for he is kind and good even to the unthankful and the unworthy.

You must not be always looking out for the faults of others. Look into your own hearts, for your own faults. You will see how many you have, and how great they are, so you will learn to think kindly of other people's faults.

If you wish to go to Heaven you will meet with many difficulties in the way. It is easy to walk in the way that leads to hell. It is like a broad and

smooth road, pleasant to travel on. If you walk in this road you can be as unkind, as naughty, as selfish as you like. But if you walk in the narrow way you will often find it rough—so rough that only a few will venture in it. In a word, you must give up seeking to please yourselves, and try to please God and to do his will rather than your own. You must be patient, and good, and loving. You must *feel* right and *think* right as well as *do* right.

But though the narrow way is hard, it has joys which are never known in the broad and easy way. There is pleasure in overcoming difficulties, there is peace in doing right, there is joy in God's smile, and his help is always ready for those who ask it.

Jesus said, It is of no use for you to *say* that you belong to me, unless you really *do* what I tell you.

The man who hears what I say, and who does what I tell him, is like a man who built his house upon a rock. One day a heavy storm of rain came down like a flood. The wind blew loud and strong, and the wind and rain together beat upon that house, but it did not fall. Why? Because its foundation was a strong rock.

Another man built his house upon the sand by the sea-shore. One day the sky became very dark, and the large black clouds burst over his house in torrents of rain. The wind roared loud, and beat hard upon the house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. Why? Because its foundation was weak, shifting sand.

The foundation, or that on which the house is built, must be firm and strong, or the house will

not stand. It does not matter how strongly the house is built, if the foundation on which it rests is weak. The house then will be sure to fall.

Jesus said that those who heard what he said and did not obey him, were like the foolish man who built upon the sand.

Children, if you do right out of love to Christ, you will not do right to be seen by others, nor will you yield to others when they tempt you to do wrong. Your reason for doing right is built upon the rock—Christ.

But if you do right to be praised by men, or if you know what you ought to do but do it not, then you are like foolish man—your goodness is without a foundation.

CHAPTER VIII

HEALING THE MAN WITH THE PALSY—SABBATH-DAY CURES.

YOU may be sure that the Pharisees did not like such sermons as those that Jesus preached. They did not like that he should see through their outside covering of goodness, into the wicked selfishness of their hearts.

They showed their dislike by acting as spies upon all he did and said, and were always trying to find fault with him.

They said that he made himself equal with God,

and pretended to have more power than he really had.

I will tell you how it was that they said he made himself greater than he really was.

Jesus had been away from his house in Capernaum for a few days, into the towns and villages near, to preach to the people there. When he returned home again, a great many people came to his house. Some were sick people who came to be made well; some were people in trouble who came to be comforted; some came to be taught, some came out of curiosity; and some came to find fault. Altogether there were a great many people there, so that the doorway was quite crowded.

The Saviour was interrupted in his teaching by a noise outside the door. There seemed to be a great deal of pushing and loud talking. What do you think it was all about?

A poor man who was ill with palsy, so that he could not use any of his limbs, or turn himself round in bed, or help himself in any way, wanted his friends to take him to Jesus. Beside all his pains of body, he was very unhappy because of his sins, so he wanted to be made well in body and mind too.

His friends, seeing his great distress, said that four of them would carry him on his bed to Jesus.

The beds in those countries were only a very thin, soft mattress, no bigger than a hearthrug, and used to be laid upon the ground.

The four men went each to a corner of the bed, and carried the sick man along the streets till they came to the house where Jesus was. When they

came to it, they found that they could not get through the door for the crowd. It was of no use to push, or call out to the people to move; there was no room to carry a sick man along.

The poor man said, Do not carry me home again, I must see Jesus.

The man's friends said, We cannot possibly get into the house.

Then they thought of another and a strange way to reach the Saviour.

There was a staircase outside the house which led to the roof. The roofs of all houses in those countries were flat, so that people could walk as well upon the house-tops as they could upon the floor of a room.

The four men carried their sick friend up this outside staircase on to the flat roof. There was a door in the roof leading to an inside staircase, but this was not large enough to let a man through lying on his bed, so they made the opening larger by breaking away some of the tiles. Then they let him down into the room where Jesus was sitting.

The Saviour was pleased to see their faith, and at once spoke to the sick man.

First of all, he quieted the sorrow of his soul for his sins: he said, Be comforted, your sins are forgiven you.

The people who came to find fault with Jesus now said in their hearts, What a wicked man this Jesus must be, to pretend that he can forgive this man his sins, when God only can do so.

You know that Jesus can forgive sin because he

LOWERING THE PALSIED MAN

is God, but then wicked men would not believe that he was the Son of God.

He could see into *their* hearts too, and knew the thoughts that were there.

He said to them, You think that I cannot forgive sins, but which is the easiest thing to do, to say to the man, Your sins are forgiven you, or to tell him to get up and walk. I never say that I have power to do anything, without really having that power, and to show you how true this is, I say now to the sick man, Arise, take up your bed, and walk back to your home.

Then the poor man, who before could not move a limb, but was obliged to be carried to Jesus, now rose, rolled up his bed, put it across his shoulders, and walked home.

The people who looked on feared and wondered: they said, We never saw anything like this before. Strange things have happened to-day.

They could but feel that it was only God who had the power to put life into those palsied limbs, therefore he who could do this had also the power of God to forgive sins.

The enemies of Jesus found yet more fault with him. Now they said that he did not keep holy the Sabbath-day.

One Sabbath morning Jesus went into a synagogue to teach, and a man was there whose hand was so withered that he could not move it. The Saviour saw the poor man, and his enemies saw him too.

They watched Jesus to see if he would heal him or not; for, if he did so, they pretended that it

JESUS OFFENDS THE PHARISEES

would be as bad as working on the Sabbath-day.

He called to the man with the withered hand, and said, Stand up, so that all may be able to see you.

The man stood up. Jesus turned to the fault-finders, and said, I want to ask you a question: Is it right to do good on the Sabbath-days or to do evil? to save life or to kill?

Jesus meant that we ought to do good to one who is in misery whenever it is in our power. The law of nature requires this, and it could not be forbidden by the law of the Sabbath; for that would be unreasonable.

Jesus further said, Suppose one of you had a sheep which fell into a pit on a Sabbath-day, would you leave the poor sheep in the deep hole till the next day because you would not break the Sabbath? You know you would not. Is not a man better than a sheep? Why, then, should this poor man go on suffering pain till to-morrow, when I can make him well to-day?

Jesus looked all around, to see if any one had anything to answer. All were silent.

Then he turned to the man and said, Stretch out your hand. The man obeyed the command; the hand was cured.

The Pharisees were not glad to see the man made well. No, they were mad with anger, and said, We will kill this Sabbath-breaker.

Again, on another Sabbath, while Christ was teaching in the synagogue, he saw among his hearers a poor woman. Her back was bent down, and she could in no wise lift herself up.

For eighteen long, weary years had this poor woman gone about bowed down under this affliction. The compassionate eye of Jesus saw her. He said, Woman, come to me: she came, glad to be called by the Healer. He laid his hands on her, and said, Woman, you shall be cured. As soon as the words were spoken, her back was made straight, and she could walk upright, and she thanked God.

The ruler of the synagogue did not dare to blame Jesus before all the people, so he turned to them and said, Why do you come on the Sabbath-day to be healed? There are six days in the week besides; in them men ought to work, and in them come and be healed.

The Lord turned to the ruler, and said, You false man; you know that every one of you will take care of his ox or his ass, and loose them from their stalls and take them to their watering-place, even on a Sabbath-day. Why should I not, even on a Sabbath-day, loose this poor woman from her burden, under which she has been bowed down for eighteen years?

When Jesus had said these things, his enemies felt ashamed that he should have reproved them before all the people, but others rejoiced at the glorious things that were done by him.

At another time, a Pharisee asked Jesus to come to his house, to eat a meal with him, one Sabbath-day. He did not ask him out of friendship, only to spy his conduct. He had caused a man all swollen with dropsy to be there too; so this Pharisee and his friends watched Jesus to see if he would heal him. The Saviour did heal the man, and he asked the

Pharisees if it was not right to cure on the Sabbath-day? They made no answer, and Jesus knew that it was of no use to try to teach them what was right, if they were determined not to learn.

CHAPTER IX

THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE—PARABLE OF THE PEARL—FEEDING THE MULTITUDE—THE TRANSFIGURATION.

ONE day Jesus went into a desert place with his disciples, for he wanted to be alone with them, that he might teach them quietly.

A great many people saw them go, and followed after them. When Jesus saw the crowds coming to him, he was not angry at being disturbed. He felt pity for them; they seemed to him to be like sheep without a shepherd. He began to teach them many things, and to heal those that had need of healing.

We do not know exactly what it was that Jesus taught that day, but the large multitude never wearied of listening to him. We know that he spoke to them of God's kingdom, and often talked in parables.

It may be that he said, The kingdom of God is like treasure hidden in a field. One day a man found this treasure: he said nothing to any one about what he had found, but sold all that he had, so that he might have money enough to buy the field, and then the treasure would be his own.

Jesus meant that he who would share in God's kingdom must be willing to give up everything for it: wealth, the good opinion of others, ease, self-pleasing, everything, in fact, that would prevent his having that greatest good—treasure in Heaven. If necessary, all these should be given up for that.

Perhaps he told them the story of the beautiful pearl. How a man who bought and sold pearls, went to the countries and markets where they were to be found, seeking for some which should be pure, and large, and precious.

One day he saw a pearl so large and costly, that it was fit to be placed in the crown of a king. This pearl was worth so much, that he was obliged to sell all that he had, before he was able to buy it. When he had bought it, he felt now that he was rich indeed.

Jesus meant, some of you are going about, seeking for the pearl of happiness. Some of you seek it in riches, but you will not find it there; some of you seek it in learning, but you will not find it there; some of you seek it in pleasure, but you will not find it there; and some of you seek happiness in always trying to have your own way, and in pleasing yourselves, but you will only find unhappiness there.

The pearl of true happiness is only to be found by believing in me, and learning of me, and obeying my voice.

You must be willing to give up everything for me, as the pearl-merchant was willing to give up all that he had, so that he might be able to buy that lovely pearl.

All who seek thus to enter into the kingdom of God will be sure to find, what is far better than a

costly pearl—rest and joy. None ever seek in vain, all are satisfied.

Perhaps Jesus said, Some of you are poor, I see, and sometimes you feel afraid that you will not always have food and clothing enough. Do not be fearful, have trust in God. Look at the fowls of the air; they do not sow seed for food, they do not reap, nor store up their food in barns, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. It is *your* Father who feeds them. Did you ever know a father on earth feed his fowls, and starve his children?

You know that you never did. You may be quite sure, then, that the Heavenly Father is not less kind than an earthly one.

Think of the beautiful lilies, too, how they grow up in all their loveliness, with no care on their part as to how they shall grow. They do not spin their white robes, which are more beautiful and glorious than all the grandeur of your grandest king. Even Solomon had no robes like theirs. But they take no thought for their clothing; God takes care for them, though they are only flowers. You may be quite sure, then, that your Father will not let you want for proper clothing, if he thus clothes the flowers of the field.

Be more careful to enter the kingdom of God than to enjoy any earthly good. Your Father knows what you need, and he will not forget you.

Such things as these, and many others, did Jesus say to the multitude, as they stood or sat around him in that desert place.

All wondered at his gracious words, all said, Never man spake like this man.

The day was far spent, and still they crowded round to listen to the Heavenly Teacher.

Then some of the twelve disciples said, Will you not tell the multitude to go home now; the day is nearly gone, and this is a desert place? Send them into the towns and villages round about, so that they may buy themselves food, for they have nothing to eat.

Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

They replied, We have only a little food ourselves—five small barley loaves, and two fishes. (These loaves were only as large as a good-sized biscuit.)

The disciples thought that it was no use to offer them to the vast crowds around them. The Master said, Make all the people sit down upon the grass. Then they sat down by hundreds and by fifties.

Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he broke them into pieces, and sent his disciples round to the people with the loaves and the fishes which he had divided.

I cannot tell you how it was that the loaves and fishes were enough for all that were there, but Jesus made enough for all.

Every man, woman, and child was satisfied.

Jesus said, Do not let the pieces that are over be wasted; go round and pick them up and put them into baskets.

How many people do you think there were to eat of these five loaves and two fishes?

There were five thousand men, beside women and children. I dare say one hungry man could have

eaten those five little loaves and two small fishes, but Jesus had made them enough for five thousand men. Besides that, when the disciples had gathered together all the pieces, there was so much left that they filled twelve baskets with them. So you see there was more at the end of the meal than there was at the beginning.

But though Jesus could thus create, or make something out of nothing, as only God can, yet he would not allow waste. He did not say, Never mind the broken pieces, I can always create more. No, he said, take care of the pieces, so that nothing be lost.

Some children, and, indeed, grown-up people too, are very wasteful. Though they cannot create one crumb, yet they waste a great many. We must learn to be like Jesus in all things. If *we* do not want the broken pieces, there are many poor people who do, so that we should take care of them for their sakes. It is better to give away than to waste, and "blessed is he that considereth the poor."

You know that Jesus lived on earth as a poor man. Many people thought that he really was only a poor man; and when he told them that he was the Son of God, they would not believe him.

Notwithstanding the many and notable miracles which Jesus wrought continually before the eyes of his disciples, their faith in him appears, nearly up to the time of his death, to have been feeble and wavering. There was, no doubt, much of the national temper in this. The Jewish mind was naturally more inflexible and perverse in the matter of belief than that of the Gentiles generally. Our Lord had repeated occasion to reprove the infidelity

JESUS FEEDS THE MULTITUDE

even of his own disciples, and to commend the faith of Gentiles.

They might have known, by the wonders that he did, and by his teaching, that he was more than a mere man, but they only judged of him by what he seemed to be.

Once, however, his three favorite disciples saw him look quite differently from his usual appearance.

One day he took Peter, James, and John to the top of a high mountain, where they were quite alone. He went there to pray, and as he prayed he was changed before them.

His face did shine as the sun, and his clothes were like robes of light. So exceeding white were they, that the disciples knew that their splendor was not of earth, but of Heaven.

Two men then came from Heaven to speak to him. They were Moses and Elijah.

Moses, who was the giver of the Law to the Jews, came to speak to him who was the End of the Law. After Christ was offered up upon the cross, all the Jewish sacrifices, which only pointed to his death, were to be done away with, as no longer needful. Elijah, the prophet, was there to speak to him, of whose coming the prophets had foretold. Now their prophecy is ended in fulfilment—Christ has come.

They talked together of the great event so soon to happen—the death of Jesus at Jerusalem, for the sake of sinful men.

This death was the wonder of the bright angels in Heaven; they could hardly understand it. Now

JESUS, MOSES, AND ELIJAH

that Moses and Elijah have come from Heaven, it is that which they talk about. Jesus, too, felt deeply the need there was for his death, when he saw how deeply man had fallen. He thought much of it, he talked about it, he prayed about it.

But how little do we think of the Saviour's great love, and of our great sins which led to his death!

At last Moses and Elijah went back to Heaven. Then a cloud of light came all around the disciples, and they were afraid as they entered into it.

Out of the cloud came a voice, and they heard these words,—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him!

Moses and Elijah are gone; they taught of a Messiah to come. He is come, he is Jesus who is my beloved Son, hear and obey him now.

This was the meaning of that voice.

When the disciples heard it, they fell down on their faces; they were so afraid that they dared not look upon the glory around them.

Jesus came and touched them: Do not be afraid, he said. They lifted up their eyes, they saw no one there but Jesus. Moses and Elijah were gone, the bright cloud had passed away, the voice spoke no more.

Jesus said, You have seen my glory, but do not tell any one what you have seen, until I am risen from the dead.

CHAPTER X

THE STRIFE OF THE DISCIPLES AS TO WHO SHOULD BE GREATEST—THE MAN WHO WAS BORN BLIND—THE STORY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

SOMETIMES Jesus sent out his disciples into the villages, to teach other people what he had before taught them. Once when they were returning to Capernaum, after one of these journeys, they began talking together, and at last their words were sharp and hasty; they disputed among themselves.

What do you think it was that they quarrelled about? It was about which of them was best, who loved Jesus most, who worked the hardest to teach others, and who should have the first place in the kingdom of God.

When they came to Capernaum, they went to the house where Jesus was.

Jesus looked up to them and said, What was it that you were quarrelling about, as you walked along? They were all so ashamed of themselves that they could not give him any answer. Besides, they knew that if he could tell that they had been disputing, he could also tell what it was about.

I dare say that each of them thought that he was the best, and that not one of them was so meek and lowly as the disciples of so good a Master should be.

Jesus called to a little boy, who was near, to come to him.

He put him into the midst of the disciples, and said, This child is the least of you all, he knows the least, he thinks you are better than he is. Be like this little child among yourselves; be humble, think but little of yourselves, and much of the good of others. Be meek and lowly, and do not care for grandeur. Great things and little things done for me are of the same worth, if both are done out of love to me. All you do is worth only the love that leads you to do it.

Children, do you ever quarrel to be first? Do you ever think that you deserve the best things? Are you unwilling to give up your will to please others? Do you ever say sharp, hasty, proud words?

Remember that Jesus hears you, and is grieved to see such selfish conduct.

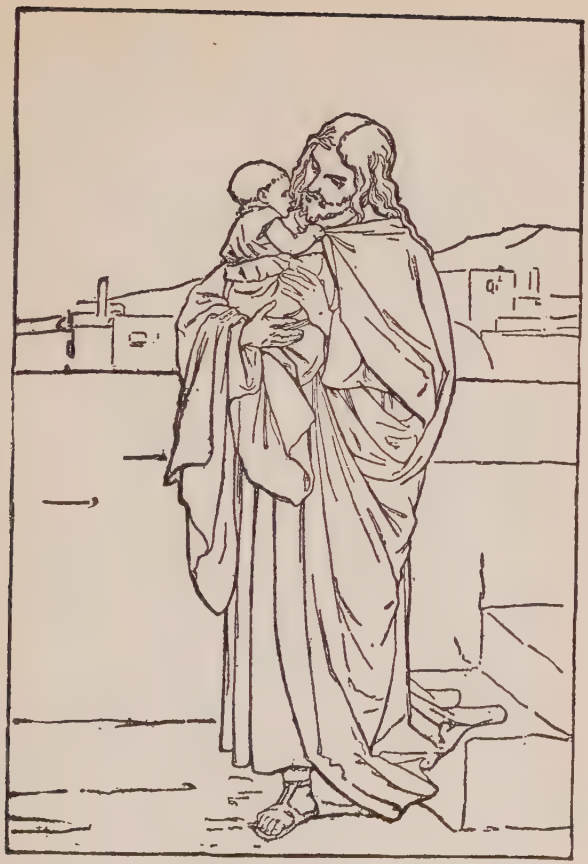
If you want to share his kingdom, you must obey his laws of love.

If you would like to be his little children, you must learn of him to be meek and lowly in heart, and loving hearts will do loving actions.

One Sabbath-day, as Jesus was leaving the temple at Jerusalem with his disciples, they saw, in passing along, a man begging, who had been blind from his birth.

The disciples said, Master, why is this man blind? Is it as a punishment for his own sins, or for the sins of his parents?

Jesus answered, Do not suppose that those people whom you see suffer most pain are the most wicked. This man is not blind for any sin of his own, nor for any sin of his parents, but that the power of God



BE LIKE A LITTLE CHILD

may be seen by his cure. I will remove his blindness; as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

When he had said these words, he spat on ground and made clay of the spittle, and rubbed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said, Now go and wash yourself in the pool of Siloam.

The man went to the pool, and he came back seeing.

This blind beggar was well known; many had seen him as he sat daily by the wayside asking for charity.

The neighbors were astonished, and said, Is not this he who sat by the wayside begging?

Some said, Yes, it is the same man.

Others, It is not he, but somebody like him.

The blind man said, I am the very man; I once was blind.

They asked, How is it that your eyes are opened?

He answered, A man named Jesus put some clay upon my eyes, and told me to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. I went and washed, as he bade me, and then my eyes were opened, so that I could see.

They said, Where is this man Jesus?

He answered, I do not know where he is gone.

Then they took the blind man to the Pharisees, and they asked him how it was that his eyes were opened.

He told them, as he had before told his neighbors, that Jesus had cured him.

Oh! said some of the Pharisees, this Jesus is not a good man, for he has broken the Sabbath-day by curing you.

Others said, He must be a good man, for God would not give a wicked man the power to do such a wonderful work as this.

So they could not agree among themselves about Jesus. They turned to the blind man and asked, What do you think of him? He opened your eyes, you ought to be able to tell whether he is a good man or not.

He answered, He is a prophet, a man of God.

The Jews then said, Surely there must be some mistake; you were not really blind before, you only pretended to be so.

Then they called the man's parents, and asked them, Is this your son? You say he was born blind: how is it then that he can now see?

The parents answered, This man is our son, and he was born blind; but how it is that he can see now, we do not know. He is grown up, and quite able to answer any questions himself that you may wish answered. You had better ask him how it is that his eyes are opened.

When they heard what the parents said, and how it was quite true that the man was born blind, they called him to them again.

They said, Give God the praise of your cure, for we know that this Jesus is a sinner.

The man answered, Whether what you say is true or not, of one thing I am quite sure, that he has cured me. I was blind, but now I see.

Again they asked, What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?

The man replied, I have told you once already, but you would not believe me. Why do you wish

me to tell you again? Is it because you wish to become his disciples?

Then they were very angry, and said sharp unkind things to the poor man. You are the disciple of that false teacher! You are the disciple of that Sabbath-breaker! But we follow the teaching of the true prophet, Moses, who was sent of God to teach us his will. As to this man Jesus, we do not know where he comes from! The man said, How strange this is: you Pharisees, who pretend to be so wise, and learned, and good, can you not tell a false teacher from a true one, or know good from evil? Has not this Jesus opened my eyes, although I have been blind all my life before, as my parents have told you, and as every one in the town knows?

No one could do this unless God gave him the power, and God does not give such power to wicked men. So wonderful a cure as mine was never heard of before, and if Jesus was not sent by God he could not have done it.

The Pharisees were now still more angry, and said, You wicked, ignorant man! How dare you pretend to teach us, who are so much wiser and better than you are?

Then they drove him away from them, turned him out of the synagogue, and said they would not let him worship with them any more; a most serious penalty as it deprived him of his rights as a Jew, and made him an outcast from his father's home.

When Jesus heard of this, he sought the man out. And when he had found him, he said, Do you believe in the Son of God?

The man had not seen Jesus before, for he had left

him when he sent him to the pool to wash. He came back seeing, but the Saviour was gone away. This, therefore, was the first time that the man saw him who had restored his sight.

In answer to the question of Jesus, he said, Lord, who is the Son of God, that I might believe in him?

Jesus said, You see him now, it is he who is talking to you.

Then the man knew that it was the same person who had cured him; he said, Lord, I believe, and he worshipped him.

Jesus first of all gave sight to the eyes of his body, then he opened the eyes of this man's mind, so that he might see in him the Saviour.

The Pharises, thought they could see Jesus with the eyes of their bodies, would not own that he was the Saviour, the Son of God.

They pretended to be wise, so they did not like his telling them, that if they did not know him they were ignorant. They did not like his reproving them for their faults, they would not see that they had any, therefore they were willingly blind.

Are you like the Pharisees? Are you blind to your sins? Are you blind to your Saviour?

Jesus says, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Jesus said, I am the Good Shepherd.

You know that a shepherd is a man who takes care of sheep.

Many of the good men that we read of in the Bible were shepherds. Jacob and his sons were shepherds. David was a shepherd before he became a king, and

many others that we read of in the Bible were shepherds too.

In Eastern countries, shepherds are very fond of their sheep. They lead them into sweet pastures by day, and at night, should any wild beast come near the flock, they will hasten to save the sheep even at the risk of their own lives.

When a lamb is tired or ill, they will not let it walk, but put it into the folds of their loose dress and carry it in their bosom. They *gently* lead their flocks, for it would not do to drive them fast under the burning sun of those Eastern lands.

When a silly sheep or lamb strays away from the fold, how carefully does the shepherd look over the mountain slopes and behind the rocks and bushes to find the wanderer!

When it is found, how greatly does he rejoice over the lost sheep!

The shepherd goes before his sheep, and they follow him. He does not drive his sheep, as shepherds do here. They know his voice, and he calls them by their names.

A few years ago, a gentleman was traveling in Judæa, and he was watching one of these shepherds as he tended his flock. He saw that the shepherd often plucked some grass and called one or other of the sheep to him. He went up to him and said, The sheep come when you call them, but I suppose they would come to any one dressed as you are. The shepherd said, Will you try, sir? So the gentleman and the shepherd changed clothes.

The gentleman, dressed as the shepherd, plucked a handful of grass, and called a sheep, but it

THE LOST LAMB IS FOUND

would not come; it did not know the stranger's voice.

The shepherd, who was dressed as the gentleman, then called a sheep, and it came directly, even though he had no food to offer it.

There! see, sir, the shepherd said, it is my voice they know, no matter how I am dressed. A stranger they will not follow.

Jesus is like the good shepherd of whom I have been telling you.

If they believe in him, grown-up people are the sheep, and believing children are the lambs of the fold.

The good shepherd will seek after the sheep that has wandered; Jesus came to seek and to save those who have gone astray from God, and are lost in the ways of sin.

The good shepherd will risk his life to save his sheep. Jesus has laid down his life for the sake of his sheep.

The good shepherd feeds his flocks with sweet pasture; Jesus feeds his people with his own divine teachings. He gives the good Spirit to them that ask him.

Are you one of the lambs of Christ's flock?

The sheep obey the shepherd's voice, they come when he calls them, they go where he leads them.

Do you follow Jesus? Do you obey his voice?

When you want to go in the path of your own sinful will, do you stop and say, No, the Good Shepherd does not lead me here, I will go in the way that he leads?

He leads *from* all selfishness, pride, anger, deceit, envy, and every sin.

He leads *to* gentleness, meekness, truthfulness, love, and all goodness.

CHAPTER XI

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN—THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

IN one of the towns beyond the river Jordan, some people might be seen talking earnestly together. Jesus of Nazareth was come into their town, and all day he had been teaching them and healing their sick. It was about him they spoke.

Surely, said one, He must be Israel's promised Saviour. Yes, said another, No prophet has ever yet done such wonderful works as we see him do. And how strange are his teachings, how full of love his words! and he heals the sick so tenderly! said a third.

He is greater than our father Abraham, said a young Hebrew mother; how I should like his blessing on my child! She looked fondly on her baby as it lay asleep in her bosom—it was her first-born son.

Let us take our children to him, said the parents of the group, and ask him to put his hands on them and bless them.

The parents took their little ones, and went to the place where Jesus was sitting with his disciples.

What are these children coming here for? said Peter, James, and John. Take them away; the Master cannot be troubled with young children

They are not sick, they do not want healing; you cannot bring them here.

But Jesus said, Come back.

He turned to his disciples and said, I am very much displeased with you: why do you send them away? It is true they have not come for healing, but they want a blessing. Let the little ones come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

So the children came near to the gentle Jesus, and he took the babies in his arms, and put the little ones on his knee, and placed his hands on the heads of the others, and gave them his blessing.

Oh, how happy were those parents as they went to their homes, saying, We knew he would notice the children. He seemed pleased to have them brought to him.

Can you not fancy how one of the bigger children said, as she laid her head on her pillow that night, Mother, I shall never forget the kind look of that prophet of Nazareth as long as I live. Is God as kind as he? They say, my daughter, that he says he is the Son of God. One of his strange sayings is That he has come to show us the Father.

Oh, mother, all he says must be true, said little Ruth.

Yes, he calls himself "the Truth," said the mother, thoughtfully. Now go to sleep, little Ruth, and dream of this wonderful Stranger.

Little Ruth went to sleep, and in her dreams she saw again the kind face, and heard again the gentle tones whispering in her ear. Let the little ones come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is

the kingdom of Heaven. It seemed to little Ruth as if she was in Heaven.

Did you ever hear a little voice saying, in the words of the hymn that all children know,—

"I wish that his hand had been placed on my head,
That his arm had been thrown around me,
And that I might have seen his kind look, when he said,
'Let the little ones come unto me.'"

I wish my parents could take me to Jesus. Where is Jesus? Up in Heaven, you say, a long way off.

Yes, he is in Heaven, but he is near us too. We have only to speak to him and he is close by us, though we cannot see him.

And your parents speak to Jesus about you, and ask him to bless you. Every time they pray for you they bring you to Jesus.

You can go to Jesus yourself by prayer, and say, Jesus, give me a blessing, even as thou didst on earth long ago bless little children. And if you *really* pray, you will feel his love coming into your heart, and then you will know that you have his blessing.

Among the many people who came to Jesus was a rich young man, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. He seemed to be very much in earnest, for he came running to the Saviour. He looked upon him as worthy of great respect, for he knelt before him as he spoke to him. He came to ask the most important of all questions that any one can ask, Good Master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life? He had wealth, he had position, he had the good opinion of others, but he felt that he had not eternal

life. The good things of this life could not make him happy; he wanted a better life than they could give, so he came to ask Jesus how he should obtain it.

Jesus said, If you wish for a life of endless happiness, keep the commandments.

Which? inquired he.

You know them, replied the Saviour; do not kill, do not steal, do not say unkind and untrue things of others; obey and honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.

Master, I have kept these laws from my youth until now; what more need I do?

Jesus looked at him as he asked this question; and as he looked he loved him.

He saw before him a kind-hearted man, one of those whose outward conduct was without fault. But the Saviour looked into his heart, and saw that all this outward goodness did not spring from love to God. Something there was loved more than God: that something was his riches. He cared more for his treasure on earth, than for treasure in Heaven.

Jesus said to him: If thou wilt be perfect, then go and sell all that you have, and give away your money to the poor; you shall then have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me.

These words of Jesus fell sadly on the ear of the rich ruler: he could not do this one thing that Jesus asked him. *Part* of his riches he might have been willing to have given up, but *all*—no, the sacrifice was too great, even if eternal life was the reward. He had come to Jesus gladly, but he turned away from him with sorrow, for he could not follow him and give up his possessions.

When he was gone, Jesus looked round about on his disciples, and said, How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

How is it so difficult? asked the disciples.

Because, said the Master, he who would follow me into eternal life, must be willing to give up *all* for me.

Rich people think a great deal about their houses, and lands, and money, and rank, and it is so hard to give up what is so highly valued on earth for treasure in Heaven.

It is not always that Christ commands the rich to sell their goods and give away the money to the poor, but every rich man should be *willing* to do so for God's sake.

Where this rich ruler was wrong was, that he cared more for his money, his rank, and his ease, than to please God. He thought that he was very good, but Jesus showed him that his heart was sinful, even if his outward conduct was good. God was not chief and first with him. If he had been kind and good to his neighbor, and so kept part of the commandments, he had not kept the first part, which is to love God with all the heart, and soul, and strength. He loved himself best.

What is it that you care for most? Is it to have your own way, and to please yourself?

Then, whether you are rich or poor, you are as bad as this rich ruler, for you are not willing to give up your *all* for God's sake. If you will not do this, Jesus says, you *cannot* be my disciple.

CHAPTER XII

MARY AND MARTHA—THE RAISING OF LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD—BLIND BARTIMEUS—THE CALLING OF ZACCHEUS—MARY ANOINTS JESUS' FEET.

ABOUT a mile and a half from the city of Jerusalem, at the bottom of the Mount of Olives, was the village of Bethany.

In one of the houses there, lived a brother and two sisters. Their names were Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. They all three loved Jesus dearly, and he loved them, too, very much.

He would often go to see them while he was staying at Jerusalem, for it was a pleasant walk to Bethany from that city.

Martha was the mistress of the house. She liked to show her love to Jesus by being very busy and making him nice things to eat. Mary liked best to sit at the feet of Jesus and to hear him talk. Martha was once vexed with Mary because she did not come and help her, and she said to Jesus, Lord, bid my sister come and help me.

Jesus said, Martha, you need not take so much trouble on my account; but one thing is needful, and Mary is wise to listen to the good things which I talk about: you had better choose the same good part too.

So Jesus, instead of sending Mary away to help Martha get him a feast, told Martha to sit by Mary's side and have a feast from him of things good for the soul.

One day Lazarus was taken very ill. He became worse and worse. The sisters said, Let us send to our dear friend Jesus, and tell him. Jesus was then in Peræa, about a day's journey from Bethany.

This was the message that they sent: Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick.

Jesus told the man who brought the message, to tell Martha and Mary that this sickness would not end in the death of Lazarus.

This message comforted the sisters: they thought, He will surely come himself and heal him.

But Jesus stayed on in the place where he was teaching the people when the message came.

Oh, what a weary time that was at Bethany at the house of Lazarus! He died on the evening of the very day that the messenger returned from Jesus.

The next day the sisters said one to another, Surely our dear friend will come to-day; but the shades of evening closed over Bethany, and Jesus had not come.

In those hot countries people are obliged to bury their friends a very short time after death. So Mary and Martha had to bury their brother before Jesus came.

All the next day they waited, but they waited in vain. He seemed to have broken his promise: he had always been faithful and true before, but now he seemed false. He said the sickness would not end in death—but Lazarus *was* dead.

At last they sent again to tell him that Lazarus was dead.

Jesus then said to his disciples, Let us go to

Bethany, our friend Lazarus sleeps: I will go and awake him.

They said, Lord, if he sleeps he will get better. But Jesus spoke of the sleep of death, while they thought that he spoke of the rest of sleep. So Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was dead.

When Jesus was near Bethany, Martha heard that he was coming, and she went to meet him.

The very sight of him brought her a little hope.

She said, Lord, if you had but come before, my brother would not have died; but even now I know that God will do whatever you ask him.

Jesus knew what she was hoping for, and said, Your brother shall rise again.

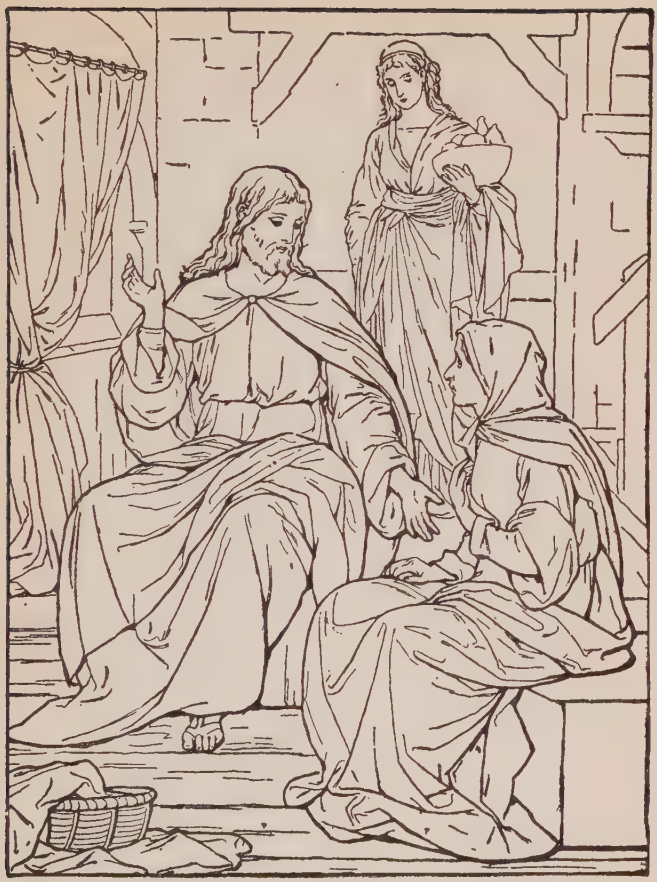
Martha said, Yes, Lord, I know he will rise again at the last day. She hardly liked to say, But will he rise again now?

Jesus said, It is from me that all life comes: the souls of those that believe in me shall never die, and, even if their bodies are dead, I can make them live again now, as well as at the resurrection-day, when all dead bodies will rise from the grave. Do you believe this?

She said, Yes, Lord, I believe you are the Son of God, and can do all things.

When she had said so, she went back to the house to her sister Mary, and whispered in her ear the welcome words, The Master is come, he asks for you.

Poor Mary was sitting in the house with a great many friends, some of whom had come from Jerusalem to comfort her and her sister in their trouble She was broken-hearted with grief, but at these



MARY SAT AT THE FEET OF JESUS

softly-spoken words of Martha's she felt that he who could indeed comfort her was come. She rose up hastily, and went out to go to the Saviour.

The Jews who were in the house had not heard what Martha had said to Mary, and they thought that she was going to the grave of Lazarus to weep there. So they followed her.

Jesus had not yet come into the village; he had stayed in the place where Martha had left him.

When Mary saw Jesus, she fell down at his feet, and could only cry out, Lord, if you had but come, my brother would not have died.

She could say no more: her tears fell fast.

Then the Jews that were with her wept too; the grief of the sisters was so great.

The sight of all this sorrow went to the heart of Jesus. He sighed a deep, bitter sigh.

Tell me where you have buried him.

They said, Lord, come with us and we will show you.

So they walked to the grave, and Jesus wept. He loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus, and his tender heart could not bear to see this dreadful grief, and not to share it.

Some of the Jews, when they saw his tears, said, He must have loved Lazarus very much.

Others, who were not very kind, said, If he can make blind people see, he could have made the sick man well; so if he had loved him he would not have let him die at all.

At last they came to the tomb: it was a cave. A great stone lay against the opening, so as to shut it up close.

When Jesus saw the grave of his friend, he again gave a deep sigh.

He said to the people round him, Take away that stone.

Martha said, Lord, he has been dead four days, so by this time his body has begun to decay away and smell badly.

Jesus said, Did I not tell you, that if you believed you should see the wonderful power of God?

Then they took away the stone from the grave, and Jesus looked in and saw the body of Lazarus lying dead.

Jesus, prayed to his Father in heaven; he said Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I know that thou hearest me always, but for the sake of the crowd that stand by I speak, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

When Jesus had finished, all the people stood by, wondering what he would do next; and Martha and Mary hoped he would make Lazarus alive again.

Then Jesus cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

The dead man heard the voice of him who is "the Resurrection and the Life." The grave cannot hold the dead against the command of the Prince of Life; for Life is stronger than Death.

Lazarus came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes wrapped around him.

Jesus said, Loose from him the clothes, and take the cloth from his face, and let him go home.

Oh, how pleased Martha and Mary must have been to have the brother they loved so dearly back again!

Yes, Jesus had not disappointed them. He had kept his word; the sickness did not end in death, for Lazarus was alive and well.

Every one who saw this miracle was astonished, and many believed that Jesus was the Son of God; but some of the ill-natured ones went to the Pharisees, who were the enemies of Jesus, and told them of this new and greatest wonder that Jesus had done. What came of their telling these things to the Pharisees you shall now hear.

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, some Jews went to the Pharisees at Jerusalem, and told them that this wonder of bringing a man back to life after he had been dead four days, had led many to believe on Jesus as the Son of God.

The Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees, then held a meeting or council together, to talk over what they should do to Jesus. They said, We must not let him go on working wonders, or else every one will think he is the Saviour, and will come and make him king; then the Romans will be angry, and fight us, and kill us all.

The High Priest Caiaphas said, It is at any rate better that one should die for all, than that all the nation should perish.

Yes, they said, we must try to seize Jesus, and when we have taken him, we will find some excuse or other for having him put to death.

They then said that if anybody knew where Jesus was, he must come and tell them, that they might take him.

The feast of the Passover would soon be held at Jerusalem, and as the Jews from all parts of the

country came to it, so they hoped to catch him then. They looked for Jesus everywhere, but they could not find him. Do you think he will come to the feast? Do you think he will be afraid, and stay away?

These were the questions that they asked one another, as they met in the temple and in the streets of Jerusalem.

Where do you think Jesus went after he raised Lazarus from the grave? He did not stay at Bethany, for that was too close to Jerusalem. He went to Ephraim, which was a very quiet village in the desert of Judæa, and several miles north of Jerusalem. There he was not known, and there for a short time he could talk with his disciples undisturbed.

He wanted to prepare them for his death, which was so soon to take place at Jerusalem.

He said, The Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees will take me, and they will say I must die. They will then give me up to the Gentiles, who will put me to death. They will laugh at me, and mock me, and spit on me, and whip me, and at last they will kill me; but I shall rise from my grave after I have been dead three days.

The disciples did not like to hear of all these sad troubles happening to their Master. They were very much astonished that he should talk so, and they were frightened.

They did not understand how it could be; but Jesus told them that if they would but look at what their own Prophets had written in their Scriptures, they would see that the Saviour would have to suffer

and die. However, they did not yet understand. After all these things had taken place, then they understood.

Jesus could not stay long at Ephraim.

He went from thence to Jericho, which place was about six hours' walk from Jerusalem. At this place he could meet the people who were coming from his own country Galilee, as they, too, were on their way to the feast at Jerusalem.

Just as Jesus came to Jericho, he met a large traveling party from Galilee. The people knew him at once, and remembered all the mighty works he had done while he lived among them. They began to praise him and honor him as he joined their company.

When they came to the gate of the town, they saw a poor blind man named Bartimeus sitting there, and begging of all those who came in and out of the town.

Bartimeus heard the noise, as it were of a great crowd coming along the road.

What is the meaning of all the noise I hear? he asked of some one near him.

Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, is coming along this way, and a great many people are with him, crying after him.

The poor blind man thought, Jesus of Nazareth! Why he is the very person I wanted to meet; they say he cures blind people, I hope he will cure me.

So he cried very loudly, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Hush, said the people, don't make such a noise, you will disturb the Saviour; it is not likely that

he will stop this procession, just to attend to a poor blind beggar like you.

But I want to be cured of my blindness, and now is the time. So he cried yet louder, Jesus, have pity on me.

Then Jesus heard his cry of distress, and he stood still. Bring that poor man to me, he wants me to do something for him.

The people knew that he never raised a hope to disappoint it, that he never called any one to come to him unless he meant to help him. They said to the poor man, Be glad, arise, and go to Jesus, he calls you to him.

Then the blind man, in his haste to go to the Saviour, threw down his cloak and went.

Jesus said, What is it that you want me to do for you?

Lord, that I may have my sight.

Jesus said, You shall see, because you believed I could cure you, I will give you your sight.

Directly Jesus spoke these words, he opened his eyes, and he could then see.

Full of thankfulness, he joined the crowd which followed Jesus, shouting his praises.

Jesus did not go on to Jerusalem with this large traveling party. Just outside the town of Jericho lived a man named Zaccheus. He was a tax-gatherer and a rich man. He was short, and as he wanted to see Jesus, whom all the people were praising, and of whom he had heard so much, he climbed into a sycamore-tree.

Now, he thought, I shall be above the people, and I shall get a good sight of the procession as it passes along the road.

Jesus, as he went by, saw Zaccheus up in the tree, so he said to him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for I am going to stay in your house to-day.

Then was Zaccheus very glad indeed. He made haste down from the tree, that he might take Jesus home with him.

When the multitude saw this, they were very much surprised, and said, It is a strange thing that the Son of God should go and lodge at the house of a man who does not bear a good character.

The heart of Zaccheus was full of love to him who had so honored him. He showed his love, by his sorrow for his past sins. Perhaps he had not been kind to the poor; now he said he would give away half his money to the poor. Perhaps he had taken from people more money than he ought to have done for the taxes; so he said, If I have wronged any one, I will give him back four times as much as I have wrongfully taken from him.

Jesus was very glad to see him repent of his sins, and begin to do right, and he said that he was one of those to whom his salvation had come.

Then he told the multitude who were displeased with him because he went to the house of a sinful man, that he came into the world on purpose to seek and to save that which was lost. The worse a man was, the more he needed some one to bring him back, like a lost sheep, to the fold.

When Jesus left Jericho, he went to Bethany. It was on a Friday that he went; the very next Friday after that, he was crucified.

The Jewish Sabbath as you know, is not on our Sunday, but on our Saturday: it begins after sunset

on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday. This last Jewish Sabbath before the death of Jesus was spent by him with his friends at Bethany.

A man named Simon invited Jesus to come and eat his Sabbath meal with him. Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, was invited too, and the busy Martha waited upon Jesus while he sat at meat.

Mary was also there. She had brought with her a box of very precious ointment as a present for Jesus. With this she rubbed his feet—those feet which were so often tired, as he went about doing good and pleasing not himself; and with the hair of her head she lovingly wiped them. Very fragrant was the scent of this sweet ointment; as Mary broke the seal of the box to pour it out, the whole house was filled with its delicious odor. But sweeter far to Jesus was the love which led her to make this offering.

It cost much money, but Mary thought nothing was too good or too costly for Jesus. She was glad to show her love by giving him the very best of what she had.

Then said one of the disciples, Judas Iscariot, It was very wasteful of you, Mary, to spend so much money for such a little use; you had better have sold the ointment, and given the money to the poor.

Did Judas care for the poor? No, he kept the bag in which the money for the poor was put, and he was a thief, and stole some of the money that was in it. He thought, If all the money that the ointment was worth had been put into the bag, I could have taken some for myself without its being missed.

Jesus said to Judas, Do not blame Mary, she has not been wasteful. This was a gift of love, and love is not to be measured by money.

There will always be poor people in the world for whom you can care, and you can do them good whenever you please. You will not have me with you long, for the day of my death is near, and Mary knows this.

As soon as ever the sun had set on this Jewish Sabbath evening, numbers of Jews came from the city of Jerusalem to see Jesus and to see Lazarus. These Jews had come from all parts of the country, by thousands, to eat the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem during the coming week. They had heard, when they reached Jerusalem, of the wonderful miracle Jesus had done in raising Lazarus from the grave, so they walked to Bethany to see Lazarus for themselves. Then many of them believed that Jesus was the Son of God.

This made the Chief Priests and Pharisees still more angry, and they said, We must put Lazarus to death as well as Jesus, because by reason of him many Jews go away and believe in Jesus.

CHAPTER XIII

CHRIST'S TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM—HE TEACHES IN THE TEMPLE—THE TRIBUTE-MONEY—JUDAS SELLS HIS MASTER.

ON the next day, which was the first day of the week, Jesus went from Bethany to Jerusalem, with his disciples and a large number of people.

As he was going along the road, he said to two of his disciples, Go into the village close by, and you will see an ass and her young one tied up. Untie them and bring them to me.

If a man to whom they belong asks you what you are doing, say to him, The Lord wants them. Then he will let you bring them.

The two disciples went and found all as Jesus had said, so they untied the ass and brought it to him.

Some of the multitude now threw their cloaks upon the ass, and Jesus sat thereon; and they all shouted his praises.

As soon as it was known in Jerusalem that Jesus was on his way to the city, great numbers of people came out to meet him with branches of the palm-tree, which they waved about as they rejoiced. Others took off their cloaks and laid them on the ground, so as to make a carpet for Jesus to ride upon.

Then the multitude again praised God with a loud voice, for all the wonders they had seen Jesus do, and said, It is true that he has raised Lazarus from the tomb.

They cried, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest.

There were some Pharisees in the crowd, and they said to Jesus, Teacher, why do you not rebuke your disciples for crying out so?

Jesus told them that the coming of the Messiah was so great an event, that should the multitude remain quiet, God would give even the stones a voice to rejoice at his approach. Yes, it was

enough to make the very dullest shout and be glad.

Now Jesus was within sight of Jerusalem. He could see its towers glittering in the sunlight. There was the well-known temple of God, and the various buildings of which every Jew was so proud. As he drew near to the city, tears of pity filled his eyes.

Why did Jesus weep? He saw the vast crowd around him, and heard the multitude cry, as with the voice of one man, Behold the King of Israel. He knew that in a few days this same crowd would shout, Crucify him, crucify him. It was not for himself, however, that he wept. He wept over the sin of the people in refusing to have him as their Saviour. He wept to think of the heavy woes which were so soon to come upon this very city, as a punishment for its great wickedness.

At length Jesus came through the city gate, and rode into the streets of Jerusalem. Every one came out of his house to see the throng and to ask who it is that the multitude is praising.

It is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, people cried.

Jesus then went into the temple, and the blind and the lame came to him to be cured, and he made them quite well.

The Chief Priests and the Scribes looked on, and were much displeased to see the wonders that Jesus did, and to hear the praises of the multitudes.

Even the very children cried, Hosanna to the Son of David.

Then the Chief Priests said to Jesus, Do you not hear what a noise these children make? Why do you not stop them?

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

I hear them, said Jesus. Have you read in the Psalms of David, that God has made praise to come out of the mouths of babes and sucklings?

Jesus then left the temple, and when the evening came he went back to Bethany.

Darker and deeper grew the hatred of the Scribes and Pharisees against Jesus. They had meant to have seized him when he came to Jerusalem, but now they did not dare to take him, for the whole city was calling him King.

Vexed and disappointed, they said, We are no nearer getting him into our power than we were before; the whole world is gone after him. Then they thought among themselves how they should get him, and said, We must take him by deceit and cunning, if we cannot by force. We must not take him at the time of the feast of the Passover, lest there be an uproar among the people, and lest they try to get him away from us. We had better seize him before the feast, or afterwards; before will be best. We will watch him while he is teaching the people, and try to make him say something which will seem to be against our law, or against the Roman government.

The next morning Jesus returned from Bethany, and went to the temple to teach the crowds who came to hear him.

The Chief Priests and Pharisees were there, seeking how they might destroy him; but they could not do anything, for all the people hung round him to hear him, and listened with great attention.

At evening time Jesus again went back to Bethany.

The next morning Jesus returned to the temple at Jerusalem. At an early hour a large crowd had gathered there, waiting for his coming from Bethany; and there, too, like beasts of prey, were Christ's enemies, seeking how they might catch him.

They sent spies to him, who pretended to be good men who really wanted Christ to teach them what was right.

They asked him a question, which, in whatever way he answered it, they hoped would be sure to offend some of the parties at Jerusalem. They were very sly; they seemed to treat Christ with respect, for they dared not do otherwise when every one was looking on him as a prophet of God.

They said to him, Teacher, we know that you say what is right, and are not afraid to speak the truth. Now tell us what you think. Ought we to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

Jesus knew that if he said, No, do not give this tax money to the Roman Emperor Cæsar, that then the Romans would say that he was speaking against the government of the country, and they would then put him in prison for rebellion. If Jesus said, Yes, you ought to pay the tax, then the Jewish chiefs would be offended, and say that he was not a friend to their nation, because he taught the people to pay taxes to an Emperor who had conquered them, and whom they hated.

Jesus saw through all their craft, and said, Why do you try to catch me in my words? Show me the money that you pay for the tax. Then they brought him a Roman penny.

Jesus looked at the coin and said, Whose image is stamped upon this piece of money?

They said, It is the likeness of Cæsar.

Then Jesus said, Give to Cæsar that which belongs to Cæsar, and give to God the things that are God's.

This wise and true answer could not give offence to any one. His enemies wondered exceedingly at it, and they held their tongues.

Again and again one party or another came to him, to try to make him say something for which they could blame him, but in vain.

This was the last day that Jesus taught in public. This Tuesday evening he went to Bethany, and remained there quietly with his disciples until Thursday afternoon.

Disappointed and angry, the enemies of Jesus again met in council. We will have his life, they said; how shall we take it?

Just then Judas came to them.

He said, So you want to get Jesus into your power? I will help you, but you must pay me for my trouble.

Oh, yes, they said, we shall be very glad to give you money for helping us.

Judas asked, How much will you give me if I deliver him up to you?

They said, We will give you thirty pieces of silver.

This was about the price of the meanest slave.

Perhaps they offered this small sum in order to show how they hated and despised Jesus, by putting upon his life only the value of a slave's life.

Judas said, I will take the money and betray Jesus. I know where he goes at night, and I will show you where he is when he is alone with his disciples. There will then be no crowd near to interfere, and you can take him away quite easily.

It was on Wednesday evening that Judas left the council to seek for a convenient time to betray Jesus. This time soon came.

The enemies of Christ said, Now he will soon be in our power, and then we will kill him; and they rejoiced with a wicked joy. They were like Satan himself, for he is always glad at wickedness and sin.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER—THE LAST SUPPER—HE COMFORTS HIS DISCIPLES.

YOU have been told that this week the feast of the Passover was held at Jerusalem; and that many thousands of Jews had come up from all parts of the country to keep it.

Do you know why this feast was held, and what the Passover meant?

It was the chief of the Jewish feasts, and it was kept at Jerusalem every year, in remembrance of the deliverance of the Jews from the land of Egypt.

About fifteen hundred years before this time, the Jews were slaves to the Egyptians, who treated them

very cruelly. God heard their cry of suffering, and sent Moses to bring them out from the land of Egypt into Canaan, or Palestine.

But Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, would not let them go; so God sent ten dreadful plagues upon the Egyptians. The last was the worst, and after that Pharaoh let the children of Israel go.

This last plague was the death of the first-born. God said that he would send an angel to *pass over* all the land of Egypt to kill the first-born son in every house, from the kingly house of Pharaoh, to the house of the poorest beggar.

But God said, The angel shall not go into any of the houses of the Israelites or Jews; if there is the blood of a lamb sprinkled upon the door-posts, the angel shall *pass over* those houses.

God also said, You must take a lamb for each family. it must be a lamb that has nothing the matter with it, it must have no disease. You must kill it and sprinkle the blood on your door-posts for the angel to see. Then you must roast it whole and eat it. If you cannot eat it all, then you must burn what is left with fire, and not leave any till morning. This was because meat in that hot country turns bad or corrupt in a very short time, and it was not fit that any part of a sacrifice to God, such as this lamb was, should become corrupt.

They were to eat the lamb with bread made without yeast or leaven. It was called unleavened bread. Now leaven is a kind of corruption, and causes fermentation in the bread in which it is used. They were to eat bread made without yeast, to teach them to put away sin in their hearts, which is

like leaven in corrupting and spreading throughout every part.

They were to eat it also with bitter salad, or herbs, to remind them of the bitter and hard bondage that they had suffered in Egypt. They were to eat it standing, with their shoes on their feet and their staff in their hands, so as to be quite ready to start at once for their journey that night from the land of Egypt. As they ate it they thanked God for sending his angel to *pass over* their houses, while he stopped at the houses of the Egyptians.

This was the passover night. Every year after that, when the same day came round again, the Jews ate a meal in the same way to remind them of that night.

The passover lamb was a type of Christ. Sin and Satan are worse taskmasters than the Egyptians ever were, and theirs is a harder service than that suffered by the Jews of old.

Christ has come to set us free from their power. We deserve punishment for our many sins. Jesus gave himself up as a sacrifice for sin. He was without any fault or sin himself, and God will pass over our sins for the sake of Jesus, if we seek to be forgiven through his death. So Jesus is called our Passover.

On the first day of the Feast of the Passover the disciples of Jesus asked him where he meant to keep the feast. To what house shall we go? said they, for Jesus had no house of his own.

Jesus said, When you go into the city you will see a man with a jug of water in his hand; follow him. Notice the house where the man goes in, and

then say to the master of that house, The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest chamber, that I may eat the passover with my disciples? He will show you a large upper room ready furnished, where you may make the supper ready.

So Peter and John went to Jerusalem, and found all happen just as Jesus had said.

They found the man with the jug of water, and they went to the master of the house where he stopped. He took them up-stairs and showed them a room with a table and couches, and all the cups and dishes that they wanted for the supper.

Then Peter and John got some wine, and the bread without leaven, and the bitter herbs, and had the lamb killed all ready for the evening.

When the evening came, Jesus and his disciples returned from Bethany, and went up into the room where the supper was to be held.

Before they began to eat their supper, Jesus rose from his place at table, and took off his robe or upper coat, and tied a towel round his waist after the fashion of a servant.

Then he took a jug and poured some water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel that was tied round his waist.

This act of Jesus astonished the disciples very much.

That their Divine Master, whom they loved and reverenced so greatly, should do for them such a lowly service, may well have surprised them. Still they held their tongues, and obeyed his wish by allowing him to wash their feet. All but Peter—he,

with his usual hastiness, said, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus said, Yes, let me do it now, I will tell you the reason why by and by.

But this did not satisfy Peter; he said, thou shalt never wash my feet.

Jesus reproved his self-will by saying, If I do not wash your feet, you cannot be mine.

This was to teach Peter that every true disciple must give up his own will entirely to Christ's will, and that it is Jesus who makes the heart clean.

Peter was frightened at the idea of having no part in Christ, so he cried out, If it is so, Lord, wash not my feet alone, but also my hands and my head.

No, replied Jesus, that would be too much. He that has bathed does not need to be washed again, excepting his feet.

Christ meant that as Peter had, according to the usual custom, bathed before coming to the supper, he was clean, excepting the dust that had come upon his feet while walking along the road to the house. This dust was what Jesus removed in washing his feet. Then Peter let Jesus do what he wished.

When Jesus had finished washing all the disciples' feet, he laid aside the towel, and put on his robe again.

Now, he said, I will tell you why I have done this. You call me your Master and Lord, and so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, can do kind and lowly acts of service for you, then you ought to be willing to be kind and loving to one another. Be humble and do not think yourselves better than others. It is far better to wait upon and do good to others,

than it is to be served yourselves. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Jesus, having washed his disciples' feet, sat down with them to supper.

As they were eating, Jesus talked to them. He seemed to be very sorry about something. What was it that troubled him so much? Was it the thought of the cruel death he was about to die?

No; it was because he was sorry that Judas was so wicked. He could hardly bear to think that any one who had been like a friend so long, should be so false as to be willing to give him up into the hands of his enemies.

At last he said out aloud, One of you, my disciples, will betray me.

Then they all looked at one another, for they could not understand what Jesus meant. Judas knew, for he was guilty, but the others did not know. They all felt very grieved, to think that any one of them could be so wicked, as to give up his dear Master to those who wished to put him to death.

They wanted very much to know who it was that could do this wicked deed, but they did not like to ask Jesus.

At last Peter whispered to John, Do you ask Jesus who it is.

John was the best loved of all the disciples, and he was next to his Master at this supper.

You must not suppose that people in those Eastern countries sat on chairs at their meals, as we do. No; they leaned on couches or sofas, which were placed round the table. They lay on one side, rest-

JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET

ing their left arm on the table, and their feet were turned out away from the table. Sometimes two, or even three people, would lie upon one couch, and so the head of one came near to the bosom of him who was reclining above him on the same couch. It was John who was thus lying on Jesus' breast now. He liked to be close to one whom he loved so dearly, and he could speak many a loving word as he lay thus in the bosom of his Master.

When Peter told John to ask Jesus who it was that should betray him, John whispered to Jesus, Lord, who is it?

Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a morsel, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the morsel, Satan entered into him. Then John knew that it was Judas who would betray Christ. Judas had seen the whisperings, and his guilty conscience told him that his intended sin was found out. As the others seemed sorry, he pretended to be sorry too, and asked Jesus very softly, Master, is it I?

Jesus answered, You have said rightly.

As soon as he had eaten what Jesus gave him, Jesus said to him, Make haste, and do what you mean to do.

Then Judas went away from the room out into the night.

The disciples could not think what Jesus meant by what he said to Judas. They thought, as Judas kept the purse, that Jesus told him to go and buy what they should want next day, or that he was to give some money to the poor.

Judas knew that Jesus meant, As you have made up your mind to betray me, do so soon.

Judas went to the Jewish Council, and said, Jesus is now at supper with his disciples in Jerusalem. He will soon go from thence to the Mount of Olives. There is a garden there to which he often goes. I know the place well, and I will show it to you by and by. Then the Council promised to send some of their servants, and some Roman soldiers, with Judas, to take him.

As soon as Judas had left the room, Jesus said, I shall not be with you much longer. I shall want you to remember me when I am gone. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. This was a fulfilment of the promise made when he said: I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. At that time the Jews said: How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and

I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: he that eateth this bread shall live forever.

This is the last meal that I shall eat with you. Be sure you love one another when I am gone away, even as I have loved you.

Peter said, Lord, where are you going?

Jesus answered, I am going where you cannot follow me; at least, not now.

Peter said, Lord, why cannot I follow you? I am willing to die for you.

Jesus said, All of you will forsake me; this very night you will be afraid, and run away, and leave me alone with my enemies.

Then Peter began to boast, and said, I am sure I shall not leave you, even if all the others do. I will lay down my life for your sake.

Jesus gently said, Will you lay down your life for my sake? O Peter, Peter, before the cock crows tomorrow morning, you will have denied me thrice.

Peter said, again and again, that he was quite sure that Jesus was mistaken. So, too, all the disciples said.

Jesus then began to comfort his disciples. He said, Do not be troubled because I go away from you. I shall go back to my Father's house, and it shall be your house too. I will get a place there ready for you. I know you will like to be where I am, and so you shall be. I myself will come for you. Trust in me. While I have been with you here, you have been used to ask me for what you wanted. You

may still ask me, pray to me for anything, when I am gone away from you.

Be sure to do as I tell you, for if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

I shall be very near to those who obey me, and my Father will be near too; as close as if we lived in the same house with them.

My Father will send the Holy Spirit to you when I am gone, and he will teach you many things that you do not understand now; and after I am dead, he will help you to remember what I have taught you while I was with you.

Then Jesus gave them his blessing; he said, *My* peace I give to you; not such as the world gives, give I to you. It is a real, true peace, that the world knows nothing about; I give it only to my disciples.

Jesus then said, Let us rise from the supper table, and go away from this house; but he could not leave off talking to and comforting his disciples. How very great was his love and care for others, if he could at such a time forget his own greater sorrow, in the grief that he knew his disciples would feel, when they found their Master roughly taken from them. He prayed a last prayer with them, and for them; a beautiful prayer, in which he most lovingly committed them to the care of his Heavenly Father. They then sung a hymn, and went to the Mount of Olives.

CHAPTER XV

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE—BETRAYED BY JUDAS—JESUS CARRIED BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST—DENIAL OF PETER.

AT the bottom of the Mount of Olives was a garden; it was called Gethsemane. The name means an oil-press; for most likely near there the oil was pressed out of the olives, ready for use.

The garden itself probably consisted of a grove of olive-trees; and in that grove, among those large trees, Jesus could pass many quiet hours unnoticed.

The olive tree is very tenacious of life, and will live to a great age. The tree is mentioned very early in Scripture. It was with an olive-leaf in her mouth that the dove returned to Noah, apprising him thereby that the waters of the flood had abated. It is often mentioned as indicating plenty, prosperity and strength.

When Jesus reached the garden, after his last supper with his disciples, it was about midnight. The full moon was shining brightly but softly, and the big trees threw large dark shadows across the path.

There were many quiet spots for prayer in this garden; that was one reason why Jesus chose to go to it so often.

Now this is his last visit to it, for his work on earth is nearly done. He began this work by going alone into the wilderness to pray; he prepares himself for its end by prayer too.

Jesus said to his disciples, I am going to pray; I wish you to stay here, while I go a little farther into the garden. Peter, James, and John, you three may come with me.

They went a little farther in, and Jesus said to them, I feel full of the greatest sorrow, it is like a heavy weight, that almost crushes me to death. I am going to pray, I want you to pray too. Then Jesus went a little way from them, and kneeled down under the shadow of an olive-tree and prayed.

Great and bitter was the sorrow that filled his soul. He grieved over the rage of his enemies, and over the blindness of the people, who would not see in him their Saviour. He also shrank at the thought of his coming death. Death came into the world through sin. Sin was the cause of all the suffering in the world, and he was now about to feel the punishment of sin for man's sake. The reason of the great agony of Christ, no sinful man can understand. Because Jesus was holy, he felt, as none of us can feel, the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

This was the chief cause of his present anguish of spirit. He was now suffering for the world, and the burden seemed heavier than he could bear. It was like a bitter drink that he did not know how to take.

He prayed, Oh, my Father, thou canst do all things; take away this cup from me; but if mankind can be saved in no other way than by my drinking it, I will drink it all. Let it be as thou wilt, not as I will.

Jesus then went to look at the three disciples, they

were not praying—they were not even awake—no, they were fast asleep.

Jesus was grieved that they showed so little feeling for him in his time of trouble. He remembered Peter's boasting and said to him, What! could you not watch with me one hour?

He told them all to keep awake and pray. Then he went away the second time and prayed again, Oh, my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.

Again Jesus returned to the three disciples, and again they were fast asleep.

He left them and went back to his place of prayer, and kneeling down he prayed yet more earnestly in the same words as before.

The conflict was over; that sharp season of trial in which his sweat was as drops of blood falling to the ground. An angel from heaven came to comfort and strengthen him. He was now quite ready to offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He knew that this was the will of God—the true end of the work that he came to do.

Jesus now returned to Peter, James, and John, and found them asleep again. He said, you may sleep on now; I will wake you no more to watch and pray with me. Soon, however, your sleep will be rudely broken, for my enemies are near. Already they are coming; arise, let us go hence.

A number of people now entered the garden. They were the servants of the Jewish council, with some Roman soldiers, and Judas was among them. The soldiers had swords, and the other men had heavy sticks. They had lanterns and torches, to

look into the caves and corners, lest Jesus should hide himself in them. They did not want them, though; for it was quite light with the full moon, and Jesus would not run away and hide himself.

Judas had said to the men beforehand, Whoever I kiss, he is the person that you are to take; hold him fast.

Then he went up to Jesus and kissed him, and said, Hail, Master!

Jesus said, Why have you come here?

He then went forward up to the men and did not wait for them to find him out.

He said, Who is it that you want?

Jesus of Nazareth, they replied.

Jesus said, I am he.

As soon as he had said this, the men went back and fell to the ground, struck by his calm, majestic look. The servants of the Jewish council must have known that he was a prophet, and the doer of many wonderful works; hence their fear.

Again Jesus asked, Whom seek ye?

Again they answered, Jesus of Nazareth.

I have told you before that I am he. I will go with you, but I command you to let my disciples go away.

How thoughtful and unselfish was the love of Jesus, to care for the safety of his disciples in that time of danger to himself.

They began to bind him, but they did not dare to touch the disciples. Then hasty Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear; and the name of that servant was Malchus. Jesus at once touched his ear and made

it quite well. It was the ear of a man who was an enemy that Jesus healed. He forgave injuries, he did not revenge them.

He turned to Peter and said, Put away your sword. These men could not take me if I did not willingly give myself up to them. If I were to ask my Father, he would at once give me, instead of you twelve apostles, more than twelve legions of angels.*

But if I were to do so, how would the old writings come true, which say I am to suffer and die? It is my Father's wish, and my own wish too, to give myself up now.

While the men were binding Jesus fast, He said, Why do you come with swords to take me, as if I were a thief? When I was with you teaching in the temple, you did not try to take me. You thought the people would not let you have me, but that you would be sure of me if you came when I was alone. But you could not take me even now, had the time not come when God allowed you to do so.

Then all the disciples, when they saw Jesus thus in the hands of his enemies, were afraid and ran away, and left him quite alone. All, even boasting Peter, fled.

The soldiers led Jesus away to the house of the High Priest.

Peter soon followed, for he wanted to see what the wicked men would do to Jesus. Another disciple was with him, and this disciple was known to the High Priest. He spoke to the woman who kept the

* A Roman legion was composed of six thousand men.

door of the High Priest's house, and said, Let this friend of mine come into the house with me.

So Peter went into the hall. This was a square yard or court, and the rooms of the house were built on the sides of the open space.

The night was cold, so the servants made a fire in the hall or court-yard, and Peter went to the fire to warm himself.

Presently the woman who kept the door came to the fire too. She looked very hard at Peter, and said, Why, you are one of the disciples of Jesus of Galilee!

Peter was frightened; he did not want any one to know that he belonged to Jesus, lest they should kill him too. So he said before all the servants, No, I am not; I do not even know the man about whom you spoke.

Peter did not like to stay by the fire any longer; he went into the passage between the court-yard and the street-door. Then, after a little while, some one else saw him, and said, Surely, you are one of the disciples of Jesus?

No, said Peter, you are mistaken; I am not.

Peter went again into the hall, and about an hour afterwards some one said, It is quite certain that you are one of this man's disciples. You talk like a man from Galilee; your speech is not like that of the men of Jerusalem.

Then one of the servants of the High Priest, who was a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, Did I not see you in the garden with Jesus? Yes, I am sure I did.

Peter was now more frightened than ever. He be-

gan to curse and swear, and say, I don't know what you mean; I know nothing about the man.

This was the third time that Peter had denied that he knew Jesus, and directly afterwards he heard a cock crow.

Then Peter remembered how he had boasted to his Master that he loved him so dearly that he would die for him. He remembered, too, how Jesus had said that before the cock crew he would have said three times that he did not even know him.

The door of the room where Jesus stood bound was open, and Peter turned to look at him. Jesus had heard the cock crow too, and he turned and looked at Peter.

It was *such* a look. It was so full of sorrowing love that Peter could not bear it. He went out of the hall at once, and began to cry, as if his heart would break. He really did love Jesus, and he felt so sorry that, out of fear for himself, he had said that he did not even know him.

Peter showed that his sorrow was real, for he was never afraid to speak the truth after that. He always owned that he knew and loved Jesus; and many years afterwards, he was willing to die for Christ rather than give up preaching about him.

CHAPTER XVI

JESUS DELIVERED OVER TO PILATE—THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE—HE SENDS HIM TO HEROD—HEROD INSULTS HIM AND SENDS HIM BACK TO PILATE—JESUS AND BARABBAS—JESUS SCOURGED—THE DEATH OF JUDAS.

AS it was in the middle of the night that Jesus was take nprisoner, they could not bring him before the Jewish council until the early morning.

The High Priest, however, during the night asked him many questions about his disciples, and about his teachings.

Jesus said, You might have known if you had come to listen to me when I taught in the Jewish places of worship, and in the temple, where all the Jews came to hear. Why do you ask me if I have said anything wrong? Ask those who have heard me whether I have said anything contrary to the truth.

Then one of the officers hit Jesus on the face, and said, Don't speak so to the High Priest.

Jesus quietly said, If I have spoken what was wrong, prove it; if not, you should not smite me.

As soon as ever it was day, the Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees met together in council, and brought Jesus before them, to ask him questions before they condemned him to death.

Many wicked men came forward to say that they had heard Jesus teach what was wrong. One, how-

ever, said one thing, and another something else, so they contradicted each other, and their witness against Jesus was of no use.

Jesus stood quite still. When he heard all these things said of him, he did not get angry and say, You are telling untruths about me.

Then the High Priest stood up in the midst of the council, and said to Jesus, Do you hear what these men say about you? Why do you not tell us whether they are speaking truth or falsehood? But Jesus held his tongue and answered nothing.

The High Priest then said, I command you, in the name of the living God, to tell us whether you are or are not the Son of God.

Then Jesus said, If I say I am, it is of no use; you know you do not mean to let me go free again. Soon, however, you will see me prove that I am the Son of God, for my kingdom will spread, and you cannot hinder it.

All of them said to him, Then you really mean to say that you *are* the Son of God?

I do, said Jesus, it is quite true.

The High Priest rent his robes, to show his great horror that Jesus should have spoken what he called blasphemy. To blaspheme is to speak irreverently of God, and they thought that Jesus, whom they looked upon as only a poor man, did not speak of God with reverence when he said that he was God's Son.

They said, We need not call any more witnesses to tell us whether they have heard him teach wrong things, for we have heard him ourselves speak against God, and pretending to be his Son. He teaches falsely, and he must be put to death.

The Jews, as I told you before, were conquered by the Romans, who did not allow them to put any one to death without their leave.

Less punishment than death the Jews might give themselves, but they did not want to send Jesus to prison, nor to scourge him; they wanted him to be put to death.

They said, We must take him to the Roman Governor Pilate: what shall we tell him is his fault? Pilate will never put him to death because he says that he is the Son of God—for Pilate is a heathen, and does not care anything about our God. We must find out something else to say against him. They thought a litle while, and then they said, We will tell Pilate that he pretends to be a king, that he tells the people not to pay taxes to the Roman government, and that he goes about from one part of the country to another teaching the people to rebel against the emperor. Pilate will listen to this story of treason against the government, though he will not care about false religious teaching. As soon as Pilate goes into the judgment-hall in the morning we will take Jesus to him.

While they were thus talking, they gave up Jesus to their servants, who ill-treated him.

They covered over his eyes, so that he could not see; then they hit him, and said, You pretend to be the Son of God, and to know all things; if this is true, you can tell us who it is that hits you, though you cannot see.

But Jesus was calm and gentle, and spoke not a single word. They spat upon his face, they beat him about, they laughed at him, and looked at him

with eyes full of hatred. They were like wild beasts; but Jesus was quiet as a lamb.

You children, who will not bear one angry word from your companions, learn of Jesus to be patient and forgiving under injury.

"The Saviour answer'd not again,
Nor spoke an angry word
To all the scoffs of wicked men,
Although he was their Lord."

The Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees, now led Jesus to the judgment-hall to Pilate, that he might try Jesus as a prisoner, and condemn him to death.

They would not go into the hall themselves, but stood outside. They wanted to eat the Passover that evening, and they said that they should not be able to do so, as they would be defiled if they entered the house of a heathen. Just as if their evil passions of hatred and anger did not make them more unclean, and unfit for this religious service, than going into the house of a Roman and a heathen would do.

Pilate, therefore went outside the hall to speak to the Jewish council. He said to them, Why have you brought this man Jesus to me?

They answered, Should we have brought him to you, if he were not an evil-doer?

Pilate said, I have not heard of any disturbance of the public peace caused by him; I expect that you do not like him, and have brought him here because you cannot agree with him on some point of your religion. You had better settle this matter

among yourselves, so take him and judge him according to your own laws.

This, however, did not suit the Jewish council. They replied, The emperor will not let us put any one to death without your leave, and we want to have this man punished by death.

Pilate then went back again into the judgment-hall, and called Jesus to him to question him again. Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus answered, Do you ask me because you yourself think that I am, or because my enemies tell you that I am?

Pilate said, I only repeat what your own nation have said to me. What have you done to make them say so?

Jesus answered, I am a king, but not in the sense in which you, a Roman, will understand me. My kingdom will not interfere with the kings of earth. If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would fight for me, as do the soldiers of earthly kings for them; and then the Jews would not have been able to take me and bring me before you.

Then you mean to say that you are a king? said Pilate.

Yes, Jesus replied, I was born into the world that I might set up a kingdom in the souls of men. All that love truth, obey my laws and mind my teaching.

Love truth! cried Pilate; what is truth? Is there such a thing?

But Pilate did not wait for an answer. He was a wicked man, and cared only for the things of this world, such as riches, and ease, and fame. He cared

nothing for the world to come—the world we cannot see—nor for truth, and holiness, and God.

He did not care to hear what truth was, but went outside the hall to the Jewish council. He thought that Jesus was a very harmless man, with some strange notions on religion, but not guilty of trying to set up a kingdom to overthrow the Roman government. He therefore said, I can find no fault with this man Jesus.

Then they all cried out fiercely, some one thing and some another, but all speaking against Jesus.

Pilate turned to Jesus and said, Do you hear all these things that the people cry out against you? What answer can you give to their charges?

But Jesus never spoke a word, so that Pilate wondered exceedingly.

Then they cried out again, He misleads the people from Galilee to Judæa.

Galilee, did you say? asked Pilate.

Yes, they said, he was brought up at Nazareth in Lower Galilee.

Then he belongs to a place of which Herod is the governor; I will send Jesus to him.

So Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, who was now come up to Jerusalem to attend the Passover.

Herod had long wanted to see Jesus, and he was very glad that Pilate had sent him. He had heard so much of the wonders that Jesus had done while he lived in Galilee, that he was very curious to see him work some miracle now.

But it was no part of the Saviour's work to satisfy a vain curiosity.

Herod did not want to learn the truth when he

asked Jesus about his teachings, so he answered none of his idle questions.

The Chief Priests and Scribes had followed Jesus to Herod, and began loudly to complain of him.

What a difference between all their angry noise and the Saviour's calmness!

Herod was vexed with Jesus, because he would not work a wonder just to please him, nor answer any of his idle questions; so he and his soldiers began to mock him. They threw a beautiful white robe over him, such as the Jewish kings wore, and laughed at him, and said, Are *you* a king? Thus robed, Herod sent him back to Pilate.

When Pilate saw Jesus brought back from Herod, he called together the Jewish council and said, You have brought this man to me as a person who misleads the people. I have questioned him, but I can find no fault in him with regard to those things for which you blame him. I have sent him to Herod, as you know, and he says, too, that he can see no reason why Jesus should be put to death.

I will therefore have him whipped, and let go.

You know that I always release a prisoner to you in honor of the feast of the Passover.

Yes, they replied, do so now, according to custom.

I will, said Pilate; you know that there is a man, named Barabbas, now in prison for robbery and murder. Choose, then, whom I shall let go free, Barabbas, or he who is called your king?

The Chief Priests had told the multitude to ask for Barabbas, so the vast crowd cried, as with the voice of one man, Away with this Jesus, and set Barabbas free!

Pilate was a Roman judge, he knew that it was his duty to punish the guilty and set free the innocent. So he ought to have done what he knew to be right, and let Jesus go instead of listening to his enemies. He had a great many soldiers, who could soon have sent all these wicked people away. Pilate thought, If I do not please them, they will write to the Roman emperor, and tell him of the many cruel things I have done to them, and then perhaps Cæsar will not let be governor any longer, and perhaps he will kill me. Pilate was afraid to do right, and this wicked fear led him to the great crime of allowing the Saviour to be put to death.

Pilate spoke again to the people, this man is innocent, but Barabbas is guilty, let Jesus go free.

The only reply was, Crucify him, crucify him!

For the third time Pilate said, I have found no reason why he should be crucified, but I will have him whipped.

That will not do, they cried. He is a false prophet, he has deceived us, he must be crucified.

Pilate found that all he said was useless, for the crowd became more and more noisy.

Then he called for some water, and washed his hands before them all, and said, I wash my hands, to show you that I am innocent of the blood of this good man. If you will have him put to death, the fault is yours.

Then all the people said, If we put him to death as an innocent man, let us and let our children bear the blame. We will answer for his blood.

What an awful speech! Not many years after they had crucified the Saviour, the Roman soldiers

CRUCIFY HIM! CRUCIFY HIM!

came and pulled down all the houses and streets of Jerusalem, and put many thousands of Jews to death by crucifixion. The Jews ever since then have had no home in their own land, but have wandered about living in strange countries.

Pilate now gave Jesus to the soldiers that they might scourge him. They took him away into the common hall, and the whole band came together to see him scourged, and to mock him. They took off his robes, so as to lay bare his back, and whipped him with ropes tied in knots, till the blood ran down, and his back was dreadfully cut and sore.

Then they put on him a cloak of purple or red, of the same color as the robes of the Roman emperor. They then said, Our king must have a crown, so they twisted a thorny plant into a wreath, and put it on his head.

Our king must have a sceptre, said they, mockingly; so they took a reed, and put it in his hands. Then they bowed the knee before him, and said with rude laughter, O king of the Jews.

They mocked him, they beat him with their hands, they spat upon his face, and took the sceptre out of his hands to hit him on the head.

It is bad to have to bear pain, even when loving friends speak kindly to us, and do all they can to make us well; but our Saviour was rudely laughed at by cruel enemies while he suffered this fearful, bloody scourging.

It was for us he bore it all; by his stripes *we* are healed.

Pilate now went out to the people, and said, I will bring Jesus to you again.

Then he brought out Jesus, all bleeding as he was, dressed out with the purple cloak and crowned with thorns.

Behold the man, he cried; can you believe that he would wish to make himself king?

Pilate hoped they would be sorry when they saw him looking so sad, with all the cruel marks of the ill-treatment of the soldiers. But, no, they had no pity. Jesus had pity for every one, but no one had pity on him.

They cried out fiercely, Crucify him, crucify him!

You must crucify him yourselves, then, said Pilate, for I see no reason why I should do so.

The Jews replied, The emperor wishes you to govern us by our own laws, and by our own laws he ought to die. He has spoken against God. He says that he is the Son of God.

Pilate then was exceedingly afraid: he asked Jesus, From whence then do you come? Are you the Son of God?

He might well think that there was something God-like in the prisoner before him.

No *man* would have so meekly borne pain, and insult, and injury. He never defended himself from the evil speaking of his enemies, and his majestic calmness was in bright contrast to the haste, and hate, and violence of his enemies.

To the question, Are you the Son of God? Jesus gave no reply.

The worldly heathen Pilate could not understand in what sense he wished to be thought the Son of God.

Again Pilate wondered at his strange silence. Why do you not answer me? he asked. Do you not know that I have power to crucify you, or power to set you free?

You could have no power to take my life, replied Jesus, did not God will, for his own wise purpose, that I should die.

When Pilate heard this, he tried more earnestly to save him, but the Jews cried out, If you let this man go, you are not true to the Emperor Cæsar; for whoever makes himself a king, as Jesus does, is an enemy to Cæsar.

Then Pilate sat down in the judgment seat in the outer paved court, but before he gave him up to the soldiers, he tried once more to save him.

He said, Look on your king.

They cried with fearful madness, Away with him, away with him! crucify him, crucify him!

For the last time, Pilate said, Shall I crucify your king?

They said, We have no king but Cæsar.

There was not a man there who did not hate the very name of the emperor, yet they cried out for him, because they hated the Saviour more. Pilate saw it was useless to speak to them again, so he said to the soldiers, Take Jesus away, and crucify him.

Judas, who betrayed Christ, heard Pilate sentence Jesus to death; he saw him led away by the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

He felt very miserable and unhappy, to think that he had told the Chief Priests where to find Jesus. Perhaps he thought that Jesus would be sure

to get away from his enemies, as he knew that he could do anything; but now, when he saw him led away to death, he could bear it no longer.

He went to the Chief Priests and Elders, and said, I have brought back the thirty silver pieces; I cannot keep this money, for it is the price of the life of an innocent man.

Pilate, the judge, had said that Christ was innocent; now the man who betrayed him said the same.

The Chief Priests ought to have sent after Jesus at once to stop his death, and say that a mistake had been made.

But these wicked men, when they heard what Judas said, only replied, It is nothing to us if he is innocent, we only care to have him killed.

Then Judas threw down the money on the floor; he had gained it in such a wicked way that he dared not keep it.

The Chief Priests took up the money, and said, We must not use it for God's temple-service, because it is the price given for a man's life; we will buy some ground with it, to make a burying-place for strangers. So they bought a field with the money.

Judas went away as soon as he had thrown down the money. He felt so full of misery, that he went and hung himself.

I suppose he tied a rope round his neck, and then fastened the other end of the rope to a tree.

Afterwards the rope broke, and Judas fell down, and his body burst.

Such was the sad end of a covetous man.

The soul of Judas went to its own place, to that place in the unseen world for which his life here would make him most fit.

CHAPER XVII.

THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF JESUS.

AFTER Pilate had passed sentence on Jesus, the soldiers took off the clothes in which they had dressed him up, and put his own on him again. They led him out of Jerusalem to a little hill close by, called Calvary. It was the place where evil-doers were put to death.

They laid upon Jesus the cross to which they were going to nail him, but after he had carried it a little way, he could bear it no longer. The cross was heavy, and he was weak and faint.

You know that, the evening before, he had gone through that dreadful agony in the garden. Since then, his disciples had run away from him, Peter had denied him, the Jewish council had vexed him with questions, Pilate and Herod had tried him, their servants had mocked him, and the soldiers had cut his back with their heavy scourges, and crowned his head with thorns. He had had no sleep all night long; no wonder that his strength was gone.

The very soldiers now took pity on him, when they saw how weary he was, and they made a man named Simon carry his cross for him.

ON THE WAY TO CALVARY

As they walked along, a great many people went with them, to see the crucifixion.

Some of them were very sorry for Jesus; there were women there who cried bitterly to see the kind Saviour thus cruelly used.

In all his suffering, Jesus ever had an ear for the sorrow of others. As he heard their cries, he turned round and said most kindly, Do not cry for me, cry for yourselves and for your children. Jesus knew that very soon God would send a heavy woe to the Jewish nation, because of their sins, especially that sin of putting him to death.

At last they come to Calvary. Two thieves are there, to be crucified at the same time as Jesus—one on his right hand, and one on his left.

The soldiers offer Jesus wine, mixed with something to take away his senses, so that he may not feel the pain of dying. Jesus is burning with feverish thirst, so he takes the offered wine, but he will not drink it when he finds what is mixed with it. He wishes to know all that happens while he is dying; he will not shrink from any of the pain.

The soldiers take off nearly all his clothes, and lift him up to the cross. They tie him to it first, and they put nails into his tender hands and feet, and hammer them into the wood of the cross.

The sight of all this agony does not move his enemies to pity; but even now, when Pilate has granted their wish, they cannot leave off mocking him.

See! the lips of Jesus move in prayer. What does he say? Father, punish my enemies for their cruelty and wickedness? No! that is not what he

says. The words are very wonderful,—he prays, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.

Oh, what a loving heart must Jesus have had, thus at such a time to pray for these wicked men.

Is not this returning good for evil?

The soldiers meanwhile divide his clothes among themselves; then they sit down and watch the cross, the multitude standing around.

Pilate had written on a piece of parchment, which was afterwards nailed on the cross, the reason why Jesus was put to death; namely, because he said he was a king. He wrote it in three languages, Hebrew, the tongue of the Jews; Greek, the tongue of the people who lived in Greece; and Latin, the tongue of the Romans. This was done that every one might be able to read it in his own speech. The words Pilate wrote were these,—This is Jesus the King of the Jews. The Chief Priests did not like this; they said to Pilate, Write, not the King of the Jews, but that he said, I am the King of the Jews. But Pilate said, I will not alter what I have written.

The people who read this parchment, as it there hangs nailed over the head of the Saviour, laugh at the would-be-king. Come down from the cross, they cry, if you are a king. You who cured the blind, you who healed the sick, you who raised the dead, you who saved others, save yourself now! Ah, you cannot! If you are the Son of God, God will not leave you to die on the cross. Come down, and we will believe in you.

If Jesus had come down from the cross, the Jews would not believe that he was God, just as the other

wonderful miracles of Christ did not make some people believe that he was God.

On each side of Jesus is a cross; a thief is nailed on each. One of them is grown so hardened in wicked ways that he mocks at the Holy One beside him. Yes, even in dying he cannot leave off scoffing.

But the other one is sorry. He reproves the mocker, and says, You and I hang on this cross as a punishment for our evil doings; we deserve to die, but Jesus has done nothing amiss. Then he turns to Jesus, and says, Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom.

The poor thief believed that Jesus was a Heavenly king, though he was crucified like a sinner.

Jesus attends at once to his prayer, and promises him bliss. He says, To-day you shall be with me in Paradise.

At the foot of Christ's cross three women stand, watching with aching hearts the dying Saviour.

One of them is Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Things that she had treasured up in her heart ever since he was a baby she thinks of now. She thinks of the angel's words, Hail, Mary, you are more blessed than any woman, when he came to tell her that God would send her a baby who would be the Son of God.

She remembers how the shepherds came to him when he lay in the manger, and how they had heard the angels sing his cradle song. She thinks of the wise men who came a long, long journey to worship the Infant King. She thinks of his obedient, sinless boyhood, his constant love to her.

She thinks of him when he was grown up, how disease fled at his touch, how raging seas were calm at his word, how devils owned his power, how the grave gave up its dead at his command. These thoughts pierced her heart like swords. There he hangs dying a shameful death. Oh, why?

Mary understood the reason much better soon afterwards, but her mother's heart is nearly breaking now.

The sight of her grief pains Jesus too. He sees close by him John, his best loved disciple; so he says to his mother, Behold your son; and to John, Behold your mother.

John knew what Jesus meant, and from that time he took Mary home with him, to live with him as his own mother. How full of love and thought for others was Jesus to the very last!

What is this strange darkness, coming on at midday, as if night were near? Why does the sun hide his light, as if he would not shine upon such an awful deed as the crucifixion of the Son of God?

The darkness deepens as the end draws near; for three hours the whole land is covered with gloom.

One loud cry of agony now bursts from the lips of the sufferer, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

All the meaning of those awful words we cannot tell. Jesus felt that bitter sorrow, that we might never know it.

Burning with thirst, the Saviour asks for a cooling drink. The soldiers offer him some of their own wine. They fill a sponge with it and put it to his lips. Jesus tastes it, and speaks for the last time. The

words are no words of sorrow now, but of triumph. It is finished. Yes! the work he came down from Heaven to do is all done now.

He bows his head, he dies!

Now the earth quakes, the rocks are rent, the veil in the Jewish temple, before the Holy of Holies, is rent asunder;—old things are passed away.

It was noon when Jesus was nailed to the cross—it was three o'clock in the afternoon when he died—the very hour when the Jews began to kill the passover lamb. Behold the Lamb of God!

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BURIAL OF JESUS—THE WOMEN FIND THE TOMB EMPTY—TWO ANGELS APPEAR TO THEM AND TELL THEM HE IS RISEN—APPEARS TO MARY MAGDALENE.

IT was about three o'clock on Friday afternoon when Jesus died. The Jewish Sabbath began at sunset that evening.

The Jews said, It is against our law to have any one hanging, either dead or dying, on the cross on a Sabbath-day; we must bury the bodies of Jesus and of the thieves before night.

They went to Pilate, and said, Will you bid your soldiers break the legs of those evil-doers so as to kill them quite, that we may be able to bury them before our Sabbath begins?

Then Pilate told his soldiers to do as the people wished. They went to one thief; he was not dead,

so they broke his legs, and that killed him; then they went to the other thief, and broke his legs, so that he died. They then went to Jesus, but he was dead already, so they did not break his legs.

Then came true the old prophecy (Exodus xii. 46; Ps. xxxiv. 20), A bone of him shall not be broken. The Jews never broke a bone of their passover lamb, which, as I have before told you, was a type of Christ. This lamb was a whole sacrifice offered up to God.

But though they did not break the Saviour's legs, yet a soldier, to make quite sure that he was dead, pierced his side, and there came out of the wound made by the spear blood and water.

You remember how the evening before, when Jesus sat at supper with his disciples, he said: Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The blood is shed now.

The bodies of the thieves were taken down from their crosses, and buried in a place set apart for evil-doers. But the body of Jesus was not buried there. When he was alive, he gave his life for the sin of the world; when he died, he died for sinners. His sacrifice is offered, God has accepted it now. He will no more be treated as an evil-doer.

Seven hundred years before, the prophet Isaiah (liii. 8, 9) said, that when the Saviour came, he would be put to death with evil-doers, and be counted one of them, but that his grave would be that of a rich man's. How this old prophecy came true I will tell you.

In the Jewish council there were one or two good men who loved Jesus, and would not consent to what the others did, when they wished to put him to death. One of these was named Joseph of Arimathea, and another Nicodemus, who once came to talk to Jesus by night.

Joseph was very rich, as well as good and just. He went to Pilate and said, Will you give me the body of Jesus, so that I may bury it?

Pilate said, I should not think that he is dead yet, for people do not generally die so quickly as that when they are crucified, but I will call the captain of the soldiers and ask him.

Then Pilate asked, Is it true that Jesus of Nazareth is dead?

Yes, he is quite dead, the captain replied.

Then you may have the body, said Pilate to Joseph.

So Joseph and his servants took down the body of Jesus from the cross very carefully. They washed off all the blood-stains from his brow, his side, his hands, and his feet. Then Nicodemus came, with a large quantity of costly spices, which smelt very sweetly, to cover over the body of Jesus, so as to prevent its turning bad. Then they wrapped it round with clean fine linen cloths, and carried it to Joseph's tomb.

This tomb was in a garden. It was quite new; no one had been buried in it before. It was cut out of a rock. When they had laid the body of Jesus in the tomb, they rolled a very large stone to the opening, so that no one could get in.

Some women, who were friends of Jesus, had

watched him when he hung upon the cross; now they watched where his body was laid. They said to one another, As soon as the Sabbath is over, we will come to the grave, and rub the body of Jesus with sweet ointment. Then they went home, to get the things ready to make it.

The enemies of Jesus did not like that he should be buried in such a sweet quiet place, all by himself. They went to Pilate early the next morning, and said, Sir, that deceiver, Jesus, said when he was alive, After three days I shall live again. Will you let us have some soldiers to guard the tomb for three days, for perhaps his disciples will come by night and steal away the body, and then say, He has risen from the dead. That deceit will be the worst of all.

Pilate said, You may have a guard of soldiers, so as to make all as safe as you can.

So they went away, and set some Roman soldiers to watch the grave. They put the seal of the Roman governor on the stone at the mouth of the grave. No one could now move it away without breaking the seal.

If the disciples had come to the guard and said, Let us have the body of Jesus, they would have replied, No, you will break the seal if you move the stone, and the governor would know it, and we should be punished.

On Friday evening Jesus was laid in the quiet grave; all Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, he lay there. The place was guarded well, by seal, by stone, by soldiers; and bright angels watched within the tomb at the Saviour's head and feet.

As they looked at that pale and silent face, they

could see in it no sight of pain. All suffering from men, and for men, was past forever. The scourged back, the wounded brow, the torn hands and feet, the pierced side, do not hurt him now.

He rests from this labor of redeeming men, as God rested from creating on the first Sabbath-day, thousands of years ago.

The Sabbath that Jesus lay in the grave was no rest-day for the broken-hearted disciples. They were filled with grief to think that their dear Master was dead. They had lived with him long, loved him much. They could hardly believe that One whom they had seen work such wonders, and even make dead men live, should at last have to die himself. All their hopes are gone now that the Master is dead. There is no one to teach them now.

Soon, however, their sorrow will be turned into joy. The dark night is passing away, and before the dawn of the morning of the first day of the week, Jesus will have left his grave.

Jesus lay in the tomb from Friday evening until Sunday morning. Just before the break of day, there was a great earthquake. An angel of God came down from Heaven to the tomb of the Saviour. He broke the seal, he rolled away the stone from the opening of the grave and sat upon it. His face was bright as the lightning, his robes were pure and white like snow. The soldiers dared not look at him, they shook with fright: they could no more move to hinder the angel than if they were all dead men.

Jesus left the tomb—he was alive again—even as he said he should be.

His enemies could not keep him in the grave, when he chose to take his life again. In vain had they sent a guard of brave soldiers to watch the tomb; they were weak as dead men. In vain had they sealed the great stone that lay before the grave; they could not hinder God's angel from rolling it away.

The soldiers went to the Chief Priests, and told them what had happened. They told the Jewish elders, and all of them said, Do not tell any one what you have told us; here is a large sum of money for you to keep quiet and hush up the story. If any one should ask questions, say the disciples came in the night, and stole away the body when we were asleep. The soldiers did as they were bid; they took the money and told the lie.

As soon as ever the sun rose, the women, who had been getting ready the sweet ointment to rub the body of Jesus, came with it to the grave.

As they walked along they said, Who shall we get to move away the great stone that is rolled before the grave?

They did not know that the enemies of Jesus had sent some soldiers to hinder any one from moving away the stone. The soldiers, however, were gone away.

At last the women came to the grave, but the great stone was rolled away!

Then they went into the grave, but they did not see the body of Jesus. Somebody has stolen him away, they exclaimed with anxiety.

Then Mary of Magdala, who was one of the women, ran away from the grave to tell Peter and John. She said to them, They have taken away

the Lord out of the grave, and we know not where they have laid him.

While Mary was gone, the other women stood wondering at the empty grave.

As they stood there, two bright angels in shining robes came to their side.

The women, afraid, bowed down before them.

One of the angels said, Do not fear; I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place were the Lord lay. Do you not remember, when he was teaching you in Galilee, how he said, that he must be given up into the hands of wicked men, who would crucify him, but that *the third day he should rise again?*

Then, when the angels reminded them, the women remembered these words of Jesus.

Now, go quickly, said the angels, and tell the disciples that the Lord has risen.

Then the women, with fear and joy, went as fast as they could from the grave, to tell the disciples what they had seen and heard.

As they went along they met Jesus himself. He spoke to them first, and then they worshipped him. They knelt at his feet and held him fast, in their joy at once more seeing their Lord.

Jesus said, Go, tell my brethren that they shall see me soon, for I am risen from the dead.

They then found the disciples, and told them the good news that Christ was risen. The news seemed to the disciples too good to be true. They said, It is like an idle tale; we cannot believe you, you must be mistaken.

MARY MAGDALENE AT THE TOMB OF JESUS

Now, while the women had gone to tell the rest of the disciples, Peter and John, who, I suppose, lived together in another part of Jerusalem from where the rest lodged, went with Mary of Magdala to see the grave.

John ran the fastest, and he reached the grave first. He did not go into the grave; he only looked in, and saw nothing but the linen clothes. Then Peter came up, and he went right into the grave. He saw no body, only the clothes neatly folded up. Then John went into the grave too; he thought, if any one had taken away the dead body, they would have carried it away in the grave-clothes; but here they were, not lying on the ground as if they had fallen off, but neatly folded as if they had been taken off. He thought of what Jesus had said about his rising again, and he began to believe it was true.

Peter and John now went back to their own home, but Mary stayed by the empty grave, weeping. As she wept, she stooped down to look again into the tomb, and she saw two angels, one sitting at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

They kindly asked her, Woman, why do you weep?

She answered, They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.

He, who always comforted the mourner, was near her now, but she knew it not.

She turned round, when a man said to her, Woman, why do you weep? What are you looking for?

MARY KNEW HER RISEN LORD

She thought he was the gardener, and said, Sir, if you have taken him out of the tomb, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

The man said, Mary! That one word was enough: she knew that tone so well. She turned to him, and said, Master! Now her sorrow was turned into joy.

He said, You must not think that you can keep me on earth, for I shall soon go to Heaven, to be with my Father and your Father, with my God and your God. Go and tell my brethren this.

Jesus had before told the other women to say to the disciples that he had risen from the dead; and, lest they should think that he had returned to stay with them on earth always, he told Mary to say that he should soon leave them on earth to go up into Heaven.

Mary then went to the disciples with the message of Jesus, but they said, We cannot think what you say is true; you must be mistaken.

CHAPTER XIX

JESUS APPEARS TO TWO DISCIPLES ON THEIR WALK TO EMMAUS, AND TO THE OTHER DISCIPLES—DOUBTING THOMAS—BLESSES THE DISCIPLES AND TELLS THEM TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.

ON the afternoon of the day that Jesus left the grave, there were two men walking to the village of Emmaus, which was a short distance from Jerusalem. These men were the disciples of Jesus, but were not of the number of the twelve apostles.

As they walked along, they talked of all the strange things that had happened in Jerusalem during the last few days.

While they were talking, a stranger came up to them and said, May I know what it is that you are talking about so earnestly? You seem to be very sad.

They said, We are talking about Jesus. Surely, if you are only a stranger here, and have lodged in Jerusalem but one night, you must have heard something of him, for every one is talking about him.

Tell me something about him, said the strange man.

Then one of them began, Jesus of Nazareth was a wonderful prophet, and worked many miracles. No one ever spoke as he did, and his teachings were not like those of the Scribes and Pharisees. Many people believed in him, but the Chief Priests and

our rulers hated him. They condemned him to death, and last Friday he was crucified.

We are very sad at this, because we hoped that he was the promised Saviour, but now we are afraid that he is not.

It is three days ago since he was put to death. Some women whom we know went to his grave this morning, and said that they could not find his body. They told us, too, that they had seen two angels, who said that he was alive! Peter and John, two of his disciples, went to the grave too, and they found the grave empty as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus. All these things puzzle us very much; we do not know what to believe.

The stranger said, Think over what your old prophets have written, hundreds of years ago, about Christ. Did they tell you that he would come as a great king? No, they said, He would be meek and lowly, that men would not own him, but would think meanly of him. They said, He would be a man of sorrows, and know well what it was to grieve.

They told you, too, that Christ must suffer and die, for he came to be the Saviour, not of the Jews alone, but of all the world. He was to save it by dying for it.

Do you not remember that it is written, He was wounded for our sins, he was bruised for our iniquities; by his stripes we are healed, and the Lord hath laid on him the punishment of us all.

Many other things did the stranger say. He told them what Moses had written of Christ, fourteen hundred years before: what David had said in the

Psalms of him, and how the prophets had told long beforehand, of those things which had just happened at Jerusalem.

See how true all this is of Jesus of Nazareth, and still believe in him as the promised Christ. Do not be cast down because he was crucified, for it was necessary that he should suffer all these things, to save the world, before he entered into glory.

The two friends listened very earnestly to the stranger, and they began to understand the old sacred writings in a new way.

The road to Emmaus did not seem long to them, they were so interested in his talk. At last they reached the village, and the stranger seemed as if he were going farther on.

Oh, do not leave us, they said; stay with us, for the day is nearly gone.

They wanted to hear more of his gracious words, for they brought hope and comfort to their sorrowing hearts.

When they sat down to take some food, the stranger took up a piece of bread. He asked a blessing, and then gave the bread to the two men. All at once, by this well-remembered act, they knew the Lord. He was a stranger to them no longer, for often had he before thus given them food. It is the Lord, they cried.

They looked to where he sat, but the seat was empty, the Lord was gone from their sight!

They said to one another, Did not his words make our hearts very warm and glad, while he explained the Scriptures to us as we walked along the road? It is true that the Lord has risen from the dead.

This news was too good to keep to themselves; they longed to make others as glad as Jesus had made them.

Though the day was nearly gone, they went back to Jerusalem that very hour, to tell the disciples that they had seen the Lord. They found them in a room, with the door locked, lest their enemies should come in and interrupt them. All the eleven were there, except Thomas. As soon as they had let the two friends into the room, they said to them, Jesus has risen from the dead; some women have seen him, and so has Peter. (How kind of Jesus to go to Peter before he went to any of the other apostles! Perhaps he said, I forgive you, Peter, for denying me.)

Then the two friends said, We have seen Jesus too; and they told them how sweetly he had talked to them; but that they thought he was a stranger, until he gave them the bread.

While they were talking together, Jesus stood before them, and said, Peace be unto you. They were all very much frightened, for how could he get into the room—the door was locked? They thought it was the spirit, not the body, of Jesus that they saw. Jesus had pity on their fears; so to quiet them, he said, Come and touch me, look at my hands and my feet, for it is I myself. You cannot see a spirit, as you can see me! Then the disciples looked at his hands and his feet, and saw the mark where the nails had been. Still they could hardly believe for joy and wonder.

Then Jesus said, Have you anything here that you can give me to eat?

They gave him some broiled fish and some honeycomb, and Jesus ate them.

So they believed that it was indeed the body of Jesus that was raised from the dead, and not his spirit, that they saw. Then Jesus told them why he had died, and he said, that when he was gone back to Heaven, they must go and teach everybody what he had taught them.

Before Jesus went back to his Father in Heaven, he showed himself several times to his disciples.

He did this for one reason, that they might be quite sure that his body was alive again, not to die any more. We now know that, as Christ has risen from the dead, so our bodies will one day rise from the grave too.

I told you that Jesus showed himself to the apostles on the evening of the very day that he rose from the dead. All were in the room, excepting Thomas. The disciples told Thomas afterwards that they had seen the Lord.

Thomas said, No, you must have fancied that you saw him. Until I put my finger into the holes made by the nails in his hands, and until I can put my hand into the spear-wound in his side, I will not believe that he is risen from the dead.

This was very wrong of Thomas. He should have believed the words of his fellow disciples; and, above all, he should have remembered what Jesus himself had said, before he died, about his rising again.

Just a week after the Saviour had met the disciples, they were all together again in a room, with the door locked. Thomas was there too. Soon they

saw Jesus standing among them, and he said, Peace be with you.

Then Jesus said to them again, Peace unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Then Jesus said to Thomas: Look at my hands; do you see the mark of the nails? Put your hand into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas was quite sure now that Jesus was alive again, and he cried out, My Lord and my God.

Jesus said to him, You believe, because you have seen me; but blessed are those who believe even though they do not see.

We cannot see Jesus with the eyes of our body; but we can believe that he is God's Son and our Saviour, though we cannot see. This is faith in Jesus.

Jesus told his disciples to leave Jerusalem, and go into Galilee; for he would meet them there.

Then they went back to their old homes by the Sea of Galilee, and began to catch fish as they used to do.

One night Peter said, I am going out fishing; six other disciples said, We will go with you. So they all got into a boat, and went out to sea.

All night they threw their nets into the still water, but they did not catch a single fish.

When the morning came, they saw some one standing on the shore, but they could not tell who it was.

He called to them, Children, have you anything to eat? No, they answered.

The man said to them, Put down your net on the right side of the ship, you will find some fish there.

They did so, and now the net was so full that they could hardly drag it along.

John then said to the other disciples, It is the Lord!

Peter could not wait till the boat came to land, but he jumped into the water, and swam to Jesus.

Jesus knew that they were tired and hungry with working all night, so with thoughtful love he had some food ready for them. They saw, when they came to land, a coal fire, some fish ready cooked, and some bread.

Jesus said, Bring here the fish that you have caught. Then Peter went to the boat, and drew the net out of it. How many fishes do you think there were in it? A hundred and fifty-three; but for all that there were so many, the net did not break.

Now, said Jesus, come and take some food. He gave them all some bread and fish, and helped them just as he used to do.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Peter, Do you love me, Peter, more than the rest of my disciples?

He said, Yes, Lord, you know that I love you dearly. Peter was humble now; he did not say now that he loved Jesus more than the others.

Jesus said to him, Feed my lambs.

Again Jesus asked, Peter, do you love me.

Again Peter answered, Yes, Lord, you know that I love you dearly.

Jesus said to him, Feed my sheep.

For the third time Jesus said to Peter, Do you love me dearly?

Peter was very grieved that Jesus should ask him three times if he loved him: it seemed as if he did not believe him. So he said, very sorrowfully, Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you.

Jesus said, Feed my sheep.

What did Jesus mean by telling Peter to feed his lambs and sheep? He meant that Peter was to show his love by his actions, and that he was to teach grown-up people and children about him, and tell them of his great love in dying for them.

Can you think why Jesus asked Peter three times over if he loved him? How many times did Peter say that he did not know Jesus? Three times? Yes. So Jesus wanted to hear Peter say that he loved him, for every time that he had said he did not know him.

How sorry Peter must have felt, how ashamed and humbled! The love of Jesus in forgiving him had melted away his proud and boastful spirit.

Then Jesus told Peter that he knew that he loved him, and one day he should indeed lay down his life for his Master's sake.

He said, Some wicked men will crucify you, because of your love to me. You will never again be afraid to tell people that you know and love me. And Peter never was.

After this Peter was one of the first to speak everywhere the truth about Jesus. Christ crucified for man's sin, Christ risen and seated at God's right hand in Heaven, was the good news he preached without fear, even to the enemies of Jesus.

Jesus said to the apostles, I want you, and all people who love me, to come and meet me on a mountain in Galilee. I will tell you when. So they all met together at the time Jesus had told them to do so. There were more than five hundred of them. Jesus came to these disciples and said, You will soon see me no more, but I shall always be near you, to help and comfort you.

Go everywhere, and teach every one the things that I have taught you. First of all, go to the people of Jerusalem. Tell them that I forgive them for putting me to death; that I died to save them.

When Jesus had talked some time with them, he left them. He did not live with his disciples as he used to do before he died. He only came to them sometimes.

CHAPTER XX

THE ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN—THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE apostles had now gone back to Jerusalem, and they saw Jesus there.

It was forty days since he rose from the dead, when he led them out as far as Bethany, which was a village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

Jesus gave his parting words to his disciples, and put his hands on them and blessed them. As he did

so, a cloud came between him and them, and in that cloud Jesus was carried up into heaven. So they saw him no more.

They could not help looking up into the sky long after he was gone from their sight.

As they gazed, two angels stood by their side, and said, Why do you stand looking up into Heaven? Jesus has gone away from you now, but one day he will come back again.

Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem.

They were not sad now, as they had been when he died. No: they knew now why he had died; they knew that he had risen from the dead; they knew that he had gone back to his Father and their Father, and that he was gone to get a home ready for them in Heaven, so that they might live with him there always.

What did the angels mean by saying that Jesus would come again from Heaven in a cloud?

They meant that one day he will come from Heaven to judge the world. Every one will see him then. At his voice every grave will open, and every dead body will live again.

Our Lord had told the apostles that though he was going to Heaven, he would send them another Comforter, who would be with them for ever, and in whom he himself should be present with them—even God the Holy Ghost, who is one with God the Father and God the Son.

Ten days after came the Feast of Pentecost, and on the first day of this feast the disciples were all together in a large public room in Jerusalem, when suddenly there came a sound from the skies as of a

JESUS CARRIED UP INTO HEAVEN

noise of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house; and there came flames like tongues divided in the midst, and sat on the head of each disciple—not burning, but shining. And wonderful knowledge came to all of them—they understood all they could not understand before; and they could speak all sorts of different languages, without ever having learnt them. These wonders were to show them that God the Holy Ghost had come down from Heaven to be with them, and to dwell in them, and help them, and make them strong for ever and ever.

The Lord God the Holy Ghost goes on coming and being with us still. He does not show us when he comes now, because it is more blessed to believe than to see; but we know he does come to each of us to help us and make us good.

The reason he made the apostles able to speak all those languages, was that they were to go and teach all the nations round the Gospel—that is to say, the good news that Christ was come, and had died for the sins of every one, and risen again. They did go and teach; and all who chose to believe and belong to Christ's kingdom were baptized. Then each of us receives the Presence of the Holy Ghost, to help us to be good, and to keep God's holy law, and the ten commandments, that he gave on Mount Sinai. More and more of that good help of the Holy Spirit is given to every one who comes, as our Lord bade, to take and eat and drink of the bread and wine, which make us think of the Body and Blood of Christ; and he gives all that we ask to us if we pray to him. For we belong to

those nations that the apostles were commanded to teach and baptize, and bring into the fold; and we belong to Jesus Christ just as much as his own first disciples did. We are called Christians, after his name; and all the time we live here, he takes care of us; and if we serve him, he takes our souls to be with him in Paradise, when death parts them from our bodies.

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again. We do not know when it will be; but, some time or other, he will send his angel to blow a trumpet; and all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and their souls will come back to their bodies; and we shall all be alive again; and if we have been good and holy, we shall be caught up to meet the Lord Jesus in the air. For then he will come, with all his holy angels, and will sit on a great white throne; and all that have ever lived will be called before him, and judged for all the things they have done, and the words they have said. And then those that have gone on doing wrong, and never being sorry, and never caring for the Lord Jesus, but have made Satan their master, will be given to Satan, to be in misery in hell-fire for ever.

But those who have tried to do their best, and held fast to our Lord Jesus, and prayed him to wash them clean in his blood, will be taken home for his sake. And they will have the happiest and most blessed home that ever can be in Heaven. There will be all brightness, and no more pain, nor grief, nor sorrow; and the Lord shall wipe off all tears from all eyes; and there shall be gladness and joy for ever and ever.

The old earth will be burnt up; but there will be new heavens, and a new earth, all beautiful, with nothing that will hurt or spoil or fade, but all lovely and peaceful.

And then there will be the great joy of singing the praise of God, who made us, and saved us, and helps us to be good, for ever and ever.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come! Alleluia!

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